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Trump bringing back trusted aide Hope Hicks to White House

By JILL COLVIN and ZEKE MILLER
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Hope Hicks, one of President Donald Trump's most trusted and longest-serving aides, is returning to the White House as the president works to surround himself with loyalists as his reelection campaign moves into high gear.

Hicks, a former White House communications director who was one of Trump's original 2016 campaign staffers, is expected to serve as counselor to the president, working with presidential son-in-law and senior adviser Jared Kushner, according to a person familiar with the situation who spoke on condition of anonymity before the announcement had been made public.



In this March 29, 2018 file photo, President Donald Trump poses for members of the media with then White House Communications Director Hope Hicks on her last day before he boards Marine One on the South Lawn of the White House in Washington.

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Associated Press

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Trump bringing back trusted aide Hope Hicks to White House

Continued from Front

She left the White House in 2018 and moved to California to work as a top executive at the Fox Corporation, though she and Trump remained in touch.

Hicks's move comes just one week after Trump was acquitted by the Senate on impeachment charges. Since then, he's been on a tear to clear his administration of those he sees as insufficiently loyal, including ousting staffers at the national security council and state department and pulling the nomination of a top treasury department pick who had overseen cases involving Trump's former aides as U.S. Attorney. More departures are expected in the coming days, including at the shrinking foreign policy arm of the White House, where Trump's national security adviser has been pushing for months to cull staff.

At the same time, Trump has been working to surround himself with long-time aides he believes he can trust as he heads into what is expected to be a



In this Feb. 27, 2018 photo, White House Communications Director Hope Hicks, arrives to meet behind closed doors with the House Intelligence Committee, at the Capitol in Washington.

Associated Press

bruising general election campaign to remain in the White House.

In addition to Hicks, Trump recently brought back John McEntee, another longtime staffer who began on the 2016 campaign as an intern and rose to become one of Trump's closest staffers, with an office adjacent to the Oval Of-

fice. McEntee had served as Trump's personal aide until he was forced out of the White House in 2018 on the orders of former chief of staff John Kelly over issues with his security clearance.

McEntee has now been tapped to lead the White House Presidential Personnel Office, an influential posting that coordinates the screening and hiring of thousands of federal government workers. As part of that mission, he is expected to work to ensure that only those who believe in Trump's mission are offered jobs.

"This is bringing back Ringo and John and Paul and George," said Jason Miller, senior communications adviser to Trump's 2016 campaign, referring to the members of the super group "The Beatles."

"This is putting the band back together for what is probably going to be the most consequential and important concert of their lives," he said, noting that

the people being brought back into the fold "are people that understand Trump as a person, who understand President Trump's priorities, who he likes personally" and who "re going to spend every waking moment of their lives trying to help him."

In her new role, Hicks will not be part of the White House communications department, but will work closely with Kushner and White House political director Brian Jack "in a number of strategic areas," according to a White House official. She is expected to start early next month, though details were still being worked out Thursday. Known for her loyalty and low public profile, Hicks was part of the small inner circle that traveled the country with Trump aboard his private jet as he waged his unlikely campaign for the Republican nomination and then the presidency in 2015 and 2016. She was often described as someone who was especially deft

at reading the president's moods and helping others navigate his instincts.

Trump never wanted Hicks to leave the White House, which she chose to do as she was called to testify before lawmakers and the special counsel's office during the Russia investigation. And she and the president remained in regular touch while she was at Fox, with the president trying to convince her to return to the White House since nearly the day she left, according to one of the people. The president's sales pitch, the person said, intensified in recent months amid impeachment.

The news of her decision was praised publicly by top administration officials, including Stephanie Grisham, the White House press secretary who also serves as the current White House communications director.

"I have worked with Hope for almost six years and can say without hesitation she is one of the most talented and savvy individuals I have come across," Grisham said in a statement. "She has always impressed me with her quiet confidence, loyalty and expertise, and I am beyond thrilled to welcome Hope back to the White House."

"There is no one more devoted to implementing President Trump's agenda than Hope Hicks," Kushner added. "We are excited to have her back on the team." Even before Trump's acquittal, his national security adviser Robert O'Brien had been working to shrink the ranks at the National Security Council, where Alexander Vindman, the director for European Affairs, had worked before he was escorted out of the White House last week. □



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In win for Amazon, judge freezes work on Pentagon contract

By **JOSEPH PISANI, RACHEL LERMAN and MATT O'BRIEN**
AP Business Writers

NEW YORK (AP)—A federal judge on Thursday ordered a temporary halt of Microsoft's work on a \$10 billion military cloud contract, a win for Amazon, which sued the U.S. government last year for awarding the contract to its rival.

Amazon's lawsuit, filed in November, alleged that President Donald Trump's bias against the company hurt its chances to win the project. Amazon and Microsoft were finalists for the lucrative contract, for which Amazon was considered an early front-runner. The project, known as Joint Enterprise Defense Infrastructure, or JEDI, will store and process vast amounts of classified data. It's intended to improve the Pentagon's communications with soldiers on the battlefield and would use artificial intelligence to speed up its war planning

and fighting capabilities. Pentagon officials have said the work would be important to advancing the U.S. military's technological advantage over adversaries. Pentagon spokesman Lt. Col. Robert Carver said in a statement that the department was disappointed in the ruling that delayed changes "and deprived our warfighters of a set of capabilities they urgently need." But he said the Pentagon remained sure of its decision to choose Microsoft.

Microsoft echoed the disappointment in a statement Thursday, but said it believes that it will ultimately be allowed to move forward with the project. Amazon did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Charles Tiefer, a government contracting law professor at the University of Baltimore, called the order to stop work on the project "striking," noting that judges

typically halt work on contracts when they see some merit in the case.

Earlier this week, Amazon asked to question Trump for its case. In July, Trump publicly stated that other companies told him the contract "wasn't competitively bid," and he said the administration would "take a very long look" at it. Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos has long been a target of Trump; the president calls the Bezos-owned Washington Post "fake news" whenever it publishes unfavorable stories about him.

In arguments making a case for Trump's deposition, Amazon sought to fit Trump's actions on the JEDI contract into a broader pattern of interference. That included the president's role in a border wall contract, his push to block AT&T's acquisition of CNN parent company Time Warner and his impeachment by the House of Representatives over his dealings



This March 27, 2008, aerial file photo, shows the Pentagon in Washington.

Associated Press

with Ukraine. Two government watchdog groups, Protect Democracy and Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington, filed legal briefs in the case this week supporting the call for depositions of Trump and other officials.

Microsoft opposed Amazon's request for depositions in a court filing this week, arguing that Amazon "is grasping at straws to find support for its baseless allegations." Microsoft, arguing that government con-

tract professionals did their jobs properly regardless of Trump's tweets, said Amazon "impugns, demeans and discredits government personnel at all levels, despite the utter absence of any support for their accusations."

Amazon asked the court to halt work on the project last month. Both the documents requesting the work stoppage and the judge's decision Thursday to issue the temporary injunction are sealed by the court. □

Limbaugh draws bipartisan criticism for Buttigieg remarks

By ALAN FRAM

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Conservative talk show host Rush Limbaugh drew bipartisan criticism Thursday for saying the country won't elect Pete Buttigieg president because he's been "kissing his husband" on stage after debates.

Limbaugh's comments came eight days after President Donald Trump awarded him the nation's top civilian honor during the State of the Union address. Trump said Limbaugh inspires millions of people daily and thanked him for "decades of tireless devotion to our country."

Limbaugh, a staunch Trump ally who recently announced he has advanced lung cancer, made the remarks on his nationally syndicated radio show. Buttigieg has finished in the top two in Democrats' first two presidential contests in Iowa and New Hampshire. "They're saying, 'OK, how's this going to look?'" Limbaugh said Wednesday, imagining Democrats' thinking. "Thirty-seven-year-



Rush Limbaugh reacts as first Lady Melania Trump, and his wife Kathryn, applaud, as President Donald Trump delivers his State of the Union address to a joint session of Congress on Capitol Hill in Washington, Tuesday, Feb. 4, 2020.

old gay guy kissing his husband on stage, next to Mr. Man, Donald Trump."

Limbaugh's remarks were the latest tendentious turn in a career in which he's won an adoring audience among millions of conservative listeners, but con-

demnation from others for comments considered racist, sexist and offensive.

Buttigieg, 38, is the former mayor of South Bend, Indiana, and has been married to his husband, Chasten, since 2018. Buttigieg was a U.S. Navy intelligence

officer in Afghanistan, is a Harvard graduate and was a Rhodes scholar at Oxford University in England.

Limbaugh said he envisioned Democrats concluding that "despite all the great wokeness and despite all the great ground that's been covered, that America's still not ready to elect a gay guy kissing his husband on the debate stage president."

Former Vice President Joe Biden, who is challenging Buttigieg for the Democratic presidential nomination, assailed Limbaugh on ABC's "The View."

"I mean, my God," said Biden, who called it "part of the depravity of this administration." He added, "Pete and I are competitors, but this guy has honor, he has courage, he is smart as hell."

Some Capitol Hill Republicans said they disagreed with Limbaugh's remark, while others demurred.

"I'm just going to leave all that alone," said conservative Sen. Marsha Blackburn, R-Tenn., who said she'd not heard the comment. Sen. Joni Ernst, R-Iowa, facing reelection this fall, also declined to comment.

"It's a miscalculation as to where the country is at," Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., a strong Trump sup-

porter, told The Associated Press about Limbaugh's words. "I think the country is not going to disqualify somebody because of their sexual orientation." Asked if Limbaugh should retain the Presidential Medal of Freedom, which Trump bestowed last week during his State of the Union address, Graham said, "Well, my God. Free speech still exists." Sen. Rob Portman, R-Ohio, said of Limbaugh, "He may disagree, as I do, with their policy positions, but the question is what their qualifications are, not other issues." Portman announced his support for gay marriage in 2013 as he revealed that his son Will is gay.

Sen. Lamar Alexander, R-Tenn., a moderate who is retiring in January, initially said he wasn't familiar with Limbaugh's remarks and declined to comment. His spokesman later emailed an Alexander statement that said: "There may be reasons not to vote for Mayor Buttigieg, but that's not one of them. This is a tolerant country."

A Buttigieg campaign spokesman declined to comment. But the candidate has addressed criticism over his sexuality before. During a Des Moines, Iowa, rally in 2019, an audience member asked what he should tell his friends who say America isn't ready for a gay president. Buttigieg replied, "Tell your friends I said 'hi.'"

The former mayor has also framed his sexuality in religious terms.

"If me being gay was a choice, it was a choice that was made far, far above my pay grade," Buttigieg said. "If you've got a problem with who I am, your problem is not with me. Your quarrel, sir, is with my creator."

According to government websites, the Presidential Medal of Freedom is for "an especially meritorious contribution to the security or national interests of the United States, world peace, cultural or other significant public or private endeavors." □

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Fiery train derailment in Kentucky spills ethanol into river

By REBECCA REYNOLDS
YONKER

Associated Press

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (AP) —

A large rock slide on a rain-saturated mountain caused a fiery train derailment Thursday morning in eastern Kentucky that briefly trapped two crew members and caused a chemical leak into a river, authorities said.

Two crew members of the CSX train were initially trapped in a flaming locomotive along the river's edge before climbing out and waiting for firefighters to rescue them by boat. They were taken to the hospital with minor injuries, officials said.

There weren't any other reports of injuries.

CSX said in a statement that the train derailed into the Big Sandy River about 7 a.m. because of a rock slide over the tracks. The derailment happened in the small Pike County community of Draffin, about 160 miles (255 kilometers) southeast of Lexington, Kentucky. Video showed a wooded area ablaze behind some homes shortly after the derailment occurred.

CSX said the train had 96 cars carrying ethanol and two cars loaded with rocks. Five rail cars derailed — four ethanol tanks and one other car — CSX said later on Twitter.

One locomotive and other cars caught fire.

The blaze was still going nearly four hours later. Ken-



First responders are on the scene of a train derailment at in eastern Kentucky, Thursday, Feb. 13, 2020.

tucky State Police spokesman William Petry said authorities were not sure whether diesel fuel or ethanol was fueling the blaze, but authorities decided to let the fire burn itself out since it did not pose a public safety threat.

"Luckily the train wasn't going very fast, so it saved them from a major disaster," Petry said.

Weather was a factor in the rock slide, which Petry estimated at about 300 feet (91 meters) long and about 50 feet (15 meters) wide. Heavy rain over the past week had left the ground on the steep hills and mountains saturated with water, Petry said.

Heavy rains have caused flooding and multiple rock slides in the region since last week. Pike County got 3 to 4 inches (7 to 10 centimeters) of rain last week and probably another inch

over the last 48 hours, said Dustin Jordan, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service.

The Mountain Water District

intake on the Russell Fork of the Big Sandy River was closed until the intake water can be tested, the Kentucky Energy and Environ-

ment Cabinet said.

"As we monitor this situation, our top priority is the health of families who rely on the Mountain Water District, and I appreciate the Emergency Response Team's swift action," Kentucky Gov. Andy Beshear said.

No homes were damaged in the sparsely populated area and residents who were briefly evacuated were allowed to return.

CSX said it had mobilized its emergency teams and were working with local authorities.

The National Transportation Safety Board said it was sending team of six to investigate the derailment. The public is being asked to avoid the area if possible, police said. □

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Education Department probes foreign gifts to Yale, Harvard

NEW HAVEN, Conn. (AP)

— The U.S. Education Department is investigating foreign gifts made to Harvard and Yale as part of a broader review of international money flowing to American universities, officials said.

The department said Wednesday it is reviewing whether the Ivy League schools potentially failed to report hundreds of millions of dollars in contracts and donations from countries including Saudi Arabia, Iran, Qatar and China.

The department previously opened investigations at schools including Georgetown University and Texas A&M as part of a campaign to scrutinize foreign funding and to improve reporting by universities.

"Unfortunately, the more we dig, the more we find that too many are under-reporting or not reporting at all. We will continue to hold colleges and universities accountable and work with them to ensure their reporting is full, accurate, and transparent, as required by the law," Education Secretary Betsy DeVos said.



In this Dec. 13, 2018, file photo, a gate opens to the Harvard University campus in Cambridge, Mass.

A Yale spokeswoman, Karen Peart, said Thursday the university is preparing a response to the Education Department's requests for information about foreign funding.

"Yale takes very seriously the importance of ensuring that funding from foreign

sources does not in any way compromise American interests, and it respects the Education Department's requirements about reporting of such funding," Peart said.

A Harvard spokesman, Jonathan Swain, said it is reviewing the notice and preparing a response.

Federal law requires U.S. colleges to report contracts and donations from foreign sources totaling \$250,000 or more. The Education Department said some of the foreign governments and corporations that donate to American universities are

known to be hostile to the U.S. and may be seeking to steal proprietary research and spread propaganda benefiting other governments.

In Yale's case, the department said it discovered in recent weeks that the university may have failed to report at least \$375 million in foreign gifts and contracts. It said in a letter to Yale that the university appeared not to have reported a single foreign source gift or contract in 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017 despite having a significant presence abroad.

Peart said that after Yale became aware of the oversight last year, it submitted in November the required reporting of foreign funding for the four missing years. She said the university believes its reporting is current and complete.

"Yale does not conduct classified or secret research, and the research we do conduct is published and available to the public through scholarly journals and other outlets," Peart said. "Yale upholds the free inquiry of its faculty and does not accept, from any source of funding, restrictions on its research or teaching."

At Harvard, a professor was charged last month with lying about his ties to a Chinese-run recruitment program and concealing payments he received from the Chinese government for research. The Education Department noted the arrest in its announcement Wednesday and said it is concerned Harvard "may lack appropriate institutional controls over foreign money" and may have failed to report fully all foreign gifts and contracts.

The department said its enforcement efforts since July have prompted the reporting of approximately \$6.5 billion in previously undisclosed foreign money. □

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State urges judges to uphold felon name change restrictions

PITTSBURGH (AP) — A lawyer with the Pennsylvania attorney general's office told a panel of judges Thursday to uphold a state law that bars some convicted felons from legally changing their names, in a case brought by three transgender women.

Alexander Korn said during Commonwealth Court oral argument in Pittsburgh that overturning that provision of the Name Change Act could frustrate employers seeking accurate background checks, the Post-Gazette reported.

The women are unable to change their masculine

first names because of a 1998 state law that was designed to prevent fraud.

Their lawyer said it was not fair to assume that all convicted felons who want to change their names have fraudulent purposes, the paper said.

The women sued the state, the Department of State and its secretary, Kathy Boockvar.

The Post-Gazette said the judges appeared to focus on whether the plaintiff had sued the correct parties.

Pennsylvania law requires anyone convicted of a felony to wait at least two

years after completion of their sentence to apply for a name change, and those convicted of certain more serious felonies are permanently barred from changing their names.

Two of the plaintiffs have felony convictions for aggravated assault and the third for rape, so the permanent ban applies to them.

Transgender people sued to challenge similar laws in Illinois and Wisconsin in May, and three current and former transgender federal inmates in Texas sued over another such law in December. □

Part of the ceiling collapses at Atlanta airport restaurant

By JEFF MARTIN

Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — Part of a restaurant ceiling collapsed inside Atlanta's airport Thursday, leaving a large chunk of it draped over countertops in the dining area. One person was taken to a hospital, and a second person was treated at the scene, airport officials said.

The collapse happened shortly before 8 a.m. Thursday in Concourse A, one of the closest concourses to the main domestic terminal, the airport said in a statement.

It appears that the ceiling was improperly attached, and there are now plans to review construction methods and design plans at other businesses inside the airport, said Tom Nissalke, the airport's assistant general manager for planning and development.

At a Thursday briefing for reporters, Nissalke described the piece that fell as "a floating ceiling." When asked whether the ceiling was "misattached," Nissalke responded, "that's how it appears, yes."

Because of its weight, the structure has to be attached to the rigid roof deck, which is designed to hold the weight, he said.

He estimated that the chunk of ceiling that fell weighed 700 to 800 pounds (318 to 363 kilograms) and crashed down as customers ate breakfast inside the restaurant. It had been that way for about the past three and a half years, he said.

Airport officials say they will now delve into the design plans to find out what happened.

"We're reviewing drawings that were the permitted drawings, to see exactly what happened and was the construction implemented according to the plans," Nissalke said.

The ceiling fell in Cat Cora's Kitchen, one of several airport locations opened by celebrity chef Cat Cora, a Jackson, Mississippi native. In 2015, Cora became the first-ever female Iron Chef on the Food Network's "Iron

Chef America." Cora's business partner, the concession firm that operates the restaurant, said in a statement that it considers the safety of its guests and employees to be deeply important.

"We are currently working with the airport and other partners to fully evaluate the situation, including any potential injuries and/or facility damage," said Regynald Washington, president of Atlanta-based Paradies Lagardère's dining division. The airport's review will extend beyond Cat Cora's Kitchen, Nissalke said, though he wasn't sure Thursday how many businesses that might be. Paradies Lagardère has partnered with Atlanta's airport on many projects and its website lists more than 30 restaurants and shops in the airport.

"We're going to go ahead and review all the other drawings associated with this concessionaire just to see if a similar situation exists," Nissalke said. "We are going to be reviewing all those other spaces."

The concession company has restaurants and stores in dozens of U.S. airports, according to its website. It lists more than two dozen shops and restaurants in several major airports, including Dallas Fort Worth International Airport, Charlotte Douglas International Airport in North Carolina, Detroit Metropolitan Airport and John F. Kennedy International Airport in New York.

In a statement from her publicist, Cora said that she was awakened Thursday morning by a call from her partners at Paradies Lagardère informing her of what had happened.

"We are working with our airport team very closely to assess the situation," Cora said.

"Above all, we just want to make sure everyone involved is ok," she said.

One person asked to be transported to a hospital, airport officials said. A second person was treated at the scene and then continued on with travel plans, Nissalke said.



Authorities inspect the damage at Cat Cora's Kitchen inside Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport, Thursday, Feb. 13, 2020, in Atlanta, after part of the restaurant's ceiling collapsed.

Associated Press

There are many companies involved in designing and building restaurants and other establishments inside the airport. Businesses known as concessionaires lease space from the city of Atlanta, then typically prepare a design and

construct the restaurant or store using architects, engineers and contractors, Nissalke said.

Photos on social media showed workers in orange vests inspecting the scene on one side of the fallen ceiling chunk, as airport

travelers stood on the other side.

There was no impact on operations at Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport, authorities said. The airport calls itself the world's busiest, averaging 275,000 passengers daily. □



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While U.S. worries about China, Europe stays focused on Russia

ROBERT BURNS

AP National Security Writer

BRUSSELS (AP) — China and its increasingly sophisticated and far-flung military sit atop U.S. Defense Secretary Mark Esper's list of international security worries, but in Europe a bigger concern is closer to home: Russia.

The Trump administration has been trying since 2018 to reorient its defense strategy toward China, with reduced focus, when possible, on Russia and the years-long insurgency wars in the greater Middle East. Russia remains a U.S. worry, but Esper and other administration officials want the allies to see China as Washington does — as a far more capable adversary.

China was not on the formal agenda when Esper met with allies at NATO headquarters Wednesday and Thursday, but he made a point of publicly expressing American concerns.

"I've raised it every time I've been here, about the 'great power' competition with China and Russia — but China in particular," he told reporters.

NATO's emphasis on Russia over China reflects the alliance's 71-year history. Throughout that time, it has been focused mainly on Russia and the former Soviet Union. And NATO nations — especially those on Russia's eastern flank — have grown warier of Moscow since its takeover of Crimea in 2014 and its incursion into eastern Ukraine.

More recently, Russian President Vladimir Putin has trumpeted his nation's pioneering development of futuristic weaponry, calling into question the effectiveness of U.S. defenses and raising the possibility of a new arms race.

European allies have also been uneasy with President Donald Trump's approach to Russia. Trump's warm words for Putin, his resistance to accepting intelligence findings of Russian interference in U.S. elections and his desire to withdraw U.S. troops from areas, like Syria, where Moscow could fill the vac-



U.S. Secretary for Defense Mark Esper, right, speaks with U.S. Ambassador to NATO Kay Bailey Hutchison during a meeting of the Resolute Support Mission at NATO headquarters in Brussels, Thursday, Feb. 13, 2020.

Associated Press

uum have caused distress within NATO. Trump's decision to delay military aid to Ukraine last year was at the core of impeachment proceedings that ended in the president's acquittal.

The Trump administration, meanwhile, sees Europe as slow to respond to threats posed by China.

It worries that China's economic engine is driving it to greater international influence, not just on the military front but also in global trade, in space and in technological advances. Russia, by contrast, is seen by the U.S. administration as a second-rate power, albeit with a huge nuclear force.

Trump's national security adviser, Robert O'Brien, recently touched on this China-Russia distinction in describing the administration's interest in nuclear arms control talks that include China as well as Russia. Trump has said his priority is an arms control deal that would include China for the first time, though China has not publicly expressed an interest in such negotiations.

"Candidly speaking, the Chinese are better prepared to have an arms

race and to do what they want than the Russians ever were," O'Brien said at the Atlantic Council this week. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo delivered his own beware-of-China message during a recent trip to Europe and Central Asia. He denounced China's human rights record, criticized its aggressive trade practices and urged his hosts to be wary of Chinese investment and influence.

He warned that China's tech giant Huawei poses a risk as countries develop next-generation, high-speed wireless networks. The Trump administration has cast Huawei as a de facto arm of the Chinese government that could enable global espionage through its 5G networks. Huawei has denied these allegations.

Esper told reporters Thursday that "NATO allies must carefully consider the long-term risks of the economic and commercial choices they make."

"At the end of the day, Chinese telecom firms have a legal obligation to provide 'technical support and assistance' to the Communist Party, and that concerns us deeply," he said.

NATO hasn't completely ignored China. Last December, for the first time, NATO leaders agreed they must as a group consider the implications for their security of China's rise to economic and military prominence.

"We recognize that China's growing influence and international policies present both opportunities and challenges that we need to address together as an alliance," the leaders said in a statement.

But they have said and done little about China since. Instead, at this week's NATO defense ministers meeting, competition with Russia was high on the agenda, including talks aimed at fashioning a NATO response to Moscow's deployment of nuclear-capable cruise missiles within reach of many allied countries. That deployment was the Trump administration's stated rationale for withdrawing last year from the Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces treaty.

Moscow also says it has begun deploying a hypersonic glide vehicle, called the Avangard, that poses new challenges for the U.S. as well as Europe because of the weapon's greater ca-

capacity for evading missile defenses. Russia also has announced intentions to deploy a nuclear-powered cruise missile, known in the West as Skyfall, that could be nuclear armed and that Moscow says will have nearly unlimited range.


The Trump administration remains committed to Europe's defense, as evidenced by U.S. participation this month in a NATO-led exercise, "Defender Europe 20," the largest deployment of U.S.-based forces to Europe in 25 years. But in the 2021 budget presented to Congress this week, the Pentagon proposed cutting spending on its European Deterrence Initiative, meant to demonstrate U.S. resolve, to \$4.5 billion from this year's \$6 billion.

The allies also are concerned about the possibility that the Trump administration will not take Moscow up on its offer to extend the New START treaty, which governs the number of U.S. and Russian strategic nuclear weapons, before it expires next February. In addition, some European officials have questioned the wisdom of an American decision to deploy a submarine-launched missile armed with a lower-yield nuclear warhead. Washington argues that it counters a Russian strategy for the potential use of battlefield nuclear weapons in Europe.

Europe and North America aren't NATO's only areas of interest. The organization has been contributing troops and other resources to the U.S.-led conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan for years, and it also has conducted combat air operations in Libya.

In his review of Wednesday's first rounds of discussions among defense ministers, NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg said they had agreed to explore what more the alliance can do to combat extremists in the Mideast and North Africa. They also discussed the war in Afghanistan.

He made no mention of China. □



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Amsterdam bans tour groups from sex workers' windows

AMSTERDAM (AP) — The local government in Amsterdam has banned guided tours that take groups past the famed windows in the city's red-light district where visitors watch semi-naked sex workers pose.

The move announced Thursday is the city government's latest attempt to address over-tourism and to clean up and to protect workers the Dutch capital's red-light district, which is a magnet for rowdy visitors.

Sex workers are regularly abused and photographed without their consent by members of tour groups, the city said.

"It is disrespectful to treat sex workers as a tourist attraction," Amsterdam Deputy Mayor Victor Everhardt said in a statement.

Tours of the red-light district still will be allowed if guides stick to the new restriction, which takes effect in April, and keep the windows off their itineraries.

Some 115 guided tours pass through the district every day. The city said research has shown that the high number of visitors inconveniences more than half of the residents and businesses in the area.

Banning group tours of the red-light district windows "will help to prevent disruptions for residents and businesses," Everhardt said.

Amsterdam has for years suffered a negative side from too many people



In this Friday March 29, 2019, file image tourists bathing in a red glow emanating from the windows and peep shows' neon lights are packed shoulder to shoulder as they shuffle through the alleys in Amsterdam's red light district, Netherlands.

Associated Press

crowding the canal-side heart, which includes the streets of the city's historic red-light district. □

European court backs Spain on express migrant deportations

By CIARÁN GILES
Associated Press

MADRID (AP) — The European Court of Human Rights on Thursday backed Spain's express deportation of two African migrants back to Morocco from a Spanish enclave in north-west Africa as part of a mass expulsion.

The court's grand chamber ruled that there had been no violation of two articles of the European Convention on Human Rights.

The case was taken by a Malian and an Ivorian with the support of the European Center for Constitutional and Human Rights, or ECCHR.

The two men, along with several dozen others, crossed the high three border wire fences separating the Spanish enclave of Melilla from Morocco in August 2014. They were caught by Spanish police and immediately returned to Morocco.

Human rights organizations have long criticized express deportations.

They claim that migrants are denied the opportunity to apply for asylum and an assessment of the risks they



In this Feb. 11, 2020 file photo, a group of migrants disembark from a vessel after being rescued by Spanish maritime authorities at Motril port in Granada, Spain.

Associated Press

face if expelled.

The European court had initially condemned Spain in October 2017 for the case and concluded that the so-called summary returns from the Spanish North African enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla to Morocco were in violation of the European Convention on Human Rights.

Thursday's ruling followed an appeal by Spain.

The appeal chamber said the migrants had "placed

themselves in an unlawful situation when they had deliberately attempted to enter Spain as part of a large group and at an unauthorized location, taking advantage of the group's large numbers and using force."

It said "they had thus chosen not to use the legal procedures which existed in order to enter Spanish territory lawfully."

Ceuta and Melilla are the European Union's only land

borders with Africa. Each year thousands of migrants, most of them from sub-Saharan countries, try to scale the fences to make it into Spain in the hope they won't be returned and may get asylum.

Although there are no official figures, Spain is known to have carried out summary returns of hundreds of migrants at the enclaves. In a statement, the ECCHR rights group said, "Instead of condemning Spain for

failing its human rights obligations, the court is ignoring evidence from all human rights institution."

It said "the decision ignores the reality at European borders, and particularly the situation of Sub-Saharan Africans at the Spanish-Moroccan frontier."

"It will be perceived as a carte blanche for violent push-backs everywhere in Europe," said Wolfgang Kaleck, general secretary of ECCHR. □

U.N. says 140,000 displaced in 3 days amid Syrian offensive

By SARAH EL DEEB

Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) — Over 140,000 Syrians have been displaced in the last three days alone by violence in the country's northwest, bringing the total of those uprooted in a Syrian government offensive against the last opposition stronghold to over 800,000, the United Nations said Thursday.

The U.N. said at least 60% of the more than 800,000 displaced since Dec. 1 are children. The humanitarian crisis in the already overcrowded opposition-held enclave is compounded by freezing weather conditions, and existing severe needs.

The government offensive, backed by Russia, has intensified and expanded to include southern and eastern Idlib province as well as southern and western Aleppo, an area home to an estimated 4 million people. Most have already been displaced from other parts of Syria because of the ongoing conflict.

The humanitarian situation for people in northwest Syria is "at the most critical points," the U.N. said, adding that the massive scale of human displacement over such a short period of time has increased needs exponentially.

David Swanson, U.N. regional spokesperson for the crisis in Syria, said more re-



Syrian civilians flee from Idlib in rain toward the north to find safety inside Syria near the border with Turkey, Thursday, Feb. 13, 2020.

sources, including funding, are immediately needed to save lives and alleviate suffering, predicting the 800,000 figure will rise in the coming days as the government offensive continues.

"This level of displacement couldn't come at a worse time as more and more people are squeezed into an increasingly smaller area of land with little more than the clothes on their back," he said, describing people fleeing in the middle of the night to avoid detection in temperatures below zero.

"The crisis is deepening by the minute, but the international community remains

indifferent," Swanson added.

Government forces, with Russian support, have focused their offensive on areas along a strategic highway that runs through opposition territory and connects the country's south to the north. The M5 highway, now secured by Syrian troops, had been out of government control since 2012 and accessing it was part of a now failed 2018 cease-fire agreement. Calls for a cease-fire have failed to stop the violence. On Thursday, government troops continued to advance through the Aleppo countryside to secure their

hold on the highway. Most of the villages and towns that sit alongside the highway are now empty, while hundreds of thousands are squeezing into displacement camps, open fields and tents to move away from the front lines.

The U.N. said 550,000 of the displaced are living in Idlib towns and villages already packed with displaced people. Another 250,000 have moved to northern Aleppo in areas administered by Turkey and allied Syrian groups.

Turkey, a sponsor of the cease-fire and a backer of the opposition, has sent thousands of troops into

the area to stall the advances, sparking rare direct confrontations with Syrian troops. The Syrian war, now in its ninth year, has pulled in international players including the U.S., Russia and Turkey. Russia has supported the Syrian government troops while the U.S. has led an international coalition fighting Islamic State group militants.

Also on Thursday, the U.S. military acknowledged its troops fired on and killed a Syrian combatant when government supporters attacked an American convoy in northeastern Syria a day earlier.

The clash Wednesday was a rare direct confrontation between a Syrian pro-government group and U.S. troops deployed in the increasingly crowded terrain near the border with Iraq and Turkey. A convoy of U.S. armored vehicles drove into a government-controlled area and was attacked by pro-government supporters, including armed men who fired at the soldiers and pelted them with stones and Molotov cocktails.

Spokesman for the U.S.-led coalition Col. Myles Caggins said the person killed was a combatant. He said the U.S. soldiers had come under fire and responded in self-defense. Syrian government media maintained the person killed was a civilian.

Associated Press

Ethiopia approves controversial law curbing hate speech



In this Monday, Oct. 10, 2016 file photo, Ethiopian men read newspapers and drink coffee at a cafe during a declared state of emergency and internet shutdown in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Associated Press

By ELIAS MESERET

Associated Press

ADDIS ABABA, Ethiopia (AP)

— Ethiopian lawmakers on

Thursday approved a controversial law aimed at curbing hate speech and disinformation, especially

online, just months ahead of a major election.

The law's approval, with 23 lawmakers opposing and two abstaining, came amid concerns over widespread online false information and hate speech that some observers blame for ethnic tensions in the East African nation.

Others worry the new law will restrict freedom of expression in a country that once jailed thousands of people, including journalists, over political views.

The new law "will not meet its goal but will discourage free expression and may eventually target people

who make innocent mistakes," Befekadu Hailu, director of the Center for the Advancement of Rights and Democracy, told The Associated Press. "But most importantly, legal actions are usually used by the state to stifle dissent in the country. To say something positive ... it may have a deterrence effect for irresponsible social media users."

Ethiopia has been experiencing sometimes deadly ethnic violence since June 2018, shortly after Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed announced sweeping political reforms for which he lat-

er was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. The loosening of restrictions on political space also led some in the country of more than 80 ethnic groups to air long-held grievances.

Some government officials and observers have called for the need to regulate hate speech and disinformation online, citing the ethnic unrest.

Lawmakers said the law is needed because existing legal provisions didn't properly address hate speech and disinformation and said it will not affect citizens' rights beyond protecting them. □

South Africa seeks more renewable energy amid power cuts

By **MOGOMOTSI MAGOME**

Associated Press

JOHANNESBURG (AP) —

South Africa's president said Thursday the coal-dependent country will turn to more renewable energy as one way to help ease power cuts that have "severely set back" efforts to rebuild the weak economy. But he warned of more blackouts in the immediate future.

South Africans have been outraged by rolling power cuts in the current mid-summer that also have worried investors. The country relies on coal for some 77% of power needs, according to the department of energy, and some citizens were astounded when officials blamed "wet coal" in part for the blackouts.

The outages are just the latest grievance in a country with 29% unemployment, widespread corruption and certain state-owned companies teetering on the edge of collapse. The economy is estimated to grow by less than 1% this year, and more than half of young people are without jobs.

President Cyril Ramaphosa's speech was delayed by an hour and a half as lawmakers with the populist Economic Freedom Fighters party told him to sit down and argued that the public enterprises minister, Pravin Gordhan, should step down.

"We can't gather like normal here when things are abnormal," EFF spokesman Mbuyiseni Ndlozi called out. Party members later walked out of the chamber.

Ramaphosa quickly acknowledged South Africa's problems. "Our economy has not grown at any meaningful rate for over a decade," he said, and "our public finances are under severe pressure."

The president warned that the "debilitating" power blackouts will continue as the struggling power utility, Eskom, makes needed changes including long-delayed maintenance.

"Over the next few months as Eskom works to restore its operational capabilities,



South African President Cyril Ramaphosa delivers his State of the Nation Address in Cape Town, South Africa, Thursday, Feb. 13, 2020.

Associated Press

we will be implementing measures that will fundamentally change the trajectory of energy generation in our country," Ramaphosa said.

Among the solutions the government is pursuing is allowing commercial and industrial users to generate their own electricity and allowing municipalities to purchase electricity from independent power producers. South Africa also will purchase more from existing wind and solar plants. "We undertake this decisive shift in our energy trajectory at a time when humankind faces its greatest existential threat in the form of climate change," the president said, and he vowed to finalize the Climate Change Bill with its framework to reduce the country's vulnerability to global warming.

Ramaphosa's term that began when the ruling African National Congress won last year's elections with its weakest victory ever has been challenging. He has promised to eradicate corruption after his predecessor resigned amid

scandal and has vowed to turn around the economy and create jobs for millions

of people.

But Ramaphosa faces growing calls to provide

clear solutions for the country's pressing issues. Many state-owned enterprises, including South African Airways, now rely on government bailouts for survival.

"After years of ... corruption and mismanagement, we are working to ensure that all SOEs are able to fulfil their developmental mandate and be financially sustainable," the president said.

The economy remains grim. "Low levels of growth mean that we are not generating enough revenue to meet our expenses, our debt is heading towards unsustainable levels and spending is misdirected towards consumption and debt-servicing rather than infrastructure and productive activity," Ramaphosa said. "We cannot continue along this path."

He promised not to let up in the fight against corruption but acknowledged that efforts so far have "not been enough to free our economy from the grim inheritance of our past, nor from the mistakes that we ourselves have made." □

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Venezuela's Foreign Minister Jorge Arreaza speaks during a press conference after visiting the International Criminal Court in The Hague, Netherlands, Thursday, Feb. 13, 2020.

Associated Press

Venezuela slams Trump for sanctions set on regime change

By SCOTT SMITH
Associated Press

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP)

— The government of President Nicolás Maduro demanded that Washington stop piling on punishing financial sanctions aimed at forcing a regime change in Venezuela as it took its case to the International Criminal Court on Thursday. Maduro's top diplomat accused the Trump administration of causing suffering and death among millions of Venezuelans in the last several years.

"We believe that these unilateral, coercive measures are crimes against humanity," Foreign Minister Jorge Arreaza said in a news conference after filing the complaint. "They also violate international law and human rights."

The White House is openly trying to drive Maduro from power and was the first of nearly 60 nations to recognize opposition leader Juan Guaidó as the country's legitimate president. They argue that Maduro's reelection in 2018 was invalid in part because the most popular opposition politicians were barred from participating. Trump recently ushered Guaidó into a Oval Office meeting and called Maduro a "tyrant."

Maduro critics say the socialist leader is responsible for the oil-rich nation's col-

lapse, with shortages of basic services like water, lights, gas and medical care that have driven at least 4.5 million to emigrate in recent years.

The Trump administration first hit Venezuela's state-run oil company with sanctions aiming to cut off Maduro's government from a vast source of wealth, flowing from the world's largest oil reserves.

It followed by putting dozens of Venezuelans in Maduro's inner circle on its sanctions list — including Maduro himself. Any of their U.S. assets were frozen and U.S. citizens are banned from doing business with them.

Most recently, it targeted a fleet of 40 commercial planes of the Venezuelan state-run airline CONVIASA. U.S. Treasury officials say "corrupt regime officials" in Maduro's government use the planes to advance anti-democratic efforts, flying to countries like North Korea, Cuba and Iran.

"What justifies sanctions on a transport company, a public service?" Maduro said, blasting the announcement. "What harm do they do to me? The damage is done to the people of Venezuela."

Arreaza said in a news conference that he had met with the prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, delivering his case against the United States. □



In this July 29, 2015 file photo, the Puerto Rican flag flies in front of Puerto Rico's Capitol as in San Juan, Puerto Rico.

Associated Press

Puerto Rico online scam targeted more than \$4M amid crisis

By DÁNICA COTO
Associated Press

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP)

— An online scam that targeted Puerto Rican agencies attempted to steal more than \$4 million, police said Thursday, deepening concerns about the management of local government finances during an economic crisis.

Authorities have frozen at least \$2.9 million, said an official who was not authorized to comment on the case and requested anonymity. The government has not said how much money was seized by the hacker.

The scam began when someone hacked into the computer of a finance worker at the island's Employee Retirement System in December, said José Ayala, director of the fraud unit within the bank robbery division. The hacker then posed as the female employee and sent emails to various government agencies alleging a change in bank accounts, he told The Associated Press.

Two agencies fell victim to the scam in recent months: Puerto Rico's Industrial Development Company sent \$63,000 in December and more than \$2.6 million in January, while the island's Tourism Company sent \$1.5 million in January to fraudulent accounts on the U.S. mainland, he said.

Puerto Rico government officials realized what had happened when the finance worker at the Employee Retirement System called the agencies and said she had not received any payments and officials responded they had already sent them.

"That's when they call us and all hell breaks loose," Ayala said.

El Nuevo Día, a Puerto Rico daily newspaper, had reported the \$1.5 million payment that the tourism company had

made. The other payment became public late Wednesday through a police report.

Ayala said no other government agencies have reported a loss as a result of the scam. He said the FBI is investigating how the computer at the Employee Retirement System got hacked.

On Thursday, legislators demanded a probe as government officials declined to provide further information, citing an ongoing investigation.

"The government of Puerto Rico is in a serious fiscal crisis. It doesn't have enough money to fulfill its obligations," said Puerto Rico Rep. Ramón Luis Cruz, who filed legislation seeking an investigation. "It's truly absurd and unsustainable to have such a shallow and vague explanation."

Incidents in which hackers spoof or compromise an email account from a legitimate person or company are common in the public and private sector, said Meredith Ward, policy and research director at the National Association of State Chief Information Officers.

"It can be compared to knocking on the door," she said. "Happens every day, but entry isn't always gained."

Around the same time the Puerto Rico incident occurred last month, a school district in Manor, Texas, reported an email phishing scam that resulted in the loss of \$2.3 million. Meanwhile, officials in Griffin, Georgia, reported a loss of more than \$800,000 last year after receiving an email requesting an account change.

More than 23,700 business email compromises, as such scams are known, were reported on the U.S. mainland last year, with total adjusted losses of more than \$1.7 billion, according to the FBI. A special FBI team said it helped recover more than \$300 million stolen in that type of scheme last year. □

LOCAL



Valentine Vibes

ORANJESTAD — Aruba Today invited their readers to surprise their loved one by sending us a picture of her/him together with a personal message to publish in our newspaper. We are thankful for the wonderful and lovely messages and pictures we received and are happy to share them with you. Enjoy this festive day where you can emphasize the importance of this special person in your life. Celebrate love! ☐



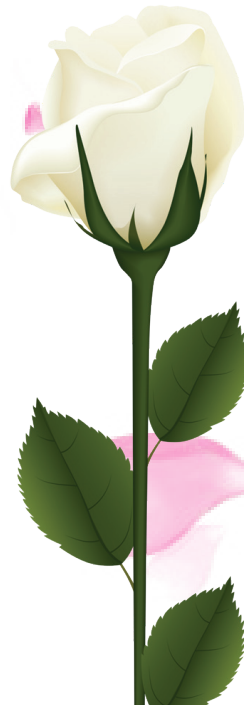
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Pat and Mike



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Valentine Vibes



Happy Valentine's Day! Happy Anniversary! One Happy Island!
Tom and Lisa



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The construction of this development is planned to take place in THREE PHASES with the FIRST PHASE consisting of the first five condominiums planned to be delivered in the second quarter of 2020. Location of this property land is everything. Take your chance to see the construction location for yourself this Saturday, February 15th between 10am and 12pm during their Open House event. PHASE TWO is planned to get started at the end of 2020 to be delivered a year later. It offers buyers of PHASE TWO condominiums the flexibility of being able to participate in the design of their own floor-

plan. This is the opportune time to plan to downsize from your oversized family home after all the children have left and start to concentrate on enjoying life in a more relaxed and realistic manner where you leave the home maintenance and home surrounding upkeep to the Condominium Home Owners Association of Bubali Modern Suites. Three-bedrooms, Two-bedrooms and One-bedrooms with 2 bathrooms are among the blueprint options of PHASE TWO. Treated aluminum windows, energy saving thermal glass,

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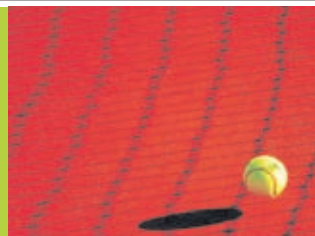
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SPORTS



Houston Astros owner Jim Crane speaks during a news conference before the start of the first official spring training baseball practice for the team Thursday, Feb. 13, 2020, in West Palm Beach, Fla.

Associated Press

Sticking to script: Bregman, Astros discuss sign stealing

By HOWARD FENDRICH

AP Sports Writer

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP)

— Alex Bregman spoke for about 30 seconds and said he was sorry, but did not say why. He said he had learned, but did not say what. On a patch of grass between the Houston Astros' spring training building and fields, under a sun obscured by clouds, the star third baseman stepped to a microphone at a news conference, becoming the first player Thursday to apologize -- without really discussing with any details -- for the sign-stealing scheme from the club's 2017 World Series championship season. "I am really sorry about the choices that were made by my team, by the organization and by me. I have learned from this and I hope to regain the trust of baseball fans," Bregman began, before thanking Astros fans and saying he and his teammates "are totally focused on moving forward to the 2020 season."

Continued on Page 22

FORE MATT

Kuchar leads, Woods, McIlroy lurk at Riviera

Matt Kuchar hits his second shot on the 13th hole during the first round of the Genesis Invitational golf tournament at Riviera Country Club, Thursday, Feb. 13, 2020, in the Pacific Palisades area of Los Angeles.

Associated Press

Page 19



Kuchar shoots 64 to lead Riviera; Tiger wastes strong start

By DOUG FERGUSON

AP Golf Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Tiger Woods began with an unknowing tribute to Kobe Bryant by making an eagle putt that optical cameras measured at 24 feet, 8 inches. He ended his opening round with a reminder that getting around Riviera unscathed is no small task. That's what made Matt Kuchar's day all the more remarkable.

Kuchar drove to the edge of the 10th green and two-putted for birdie and kept right on rolling until he had a 7-under 64 on Thursday, matching his best score at Riviera and giving him a three-shot lead in the Genesis Invitational.

So clean was Kuchar's round that he only once had to stress over a par putt, and he made the 10-footer at the par-3 fourth.

"I think it's one of the few courses that has truly stood the test of time," Kuchar said. "It was a great test of golf 50 years ago when Ben Hogan was playing, it's a great test today with Tiger Woods and all the young boys playing."

The conditions were ideal once the morning chill gave way to mild sunshine, and Kuchar took advantage in the morning. As much as Kuchar loves the course, he has only one top 10 in his 13 previous appearances.

Woods was 4 under through eight holes and had to settle for a 69.

His record at Riviera is under far greater scrutiny, especially this week as he tries for his 83rd PGA Tour victory to set the career mark he now shares with Sam Snead. Woods has not won in 10 appearances as a pro, two others as a teenage amateur.

This one held promise, especially after he drilled an 8-iron into the par-5 opening hole and made the eagle putt. The death of Bryant on Jan. 26 is still raw in Los Angeles, and the tour dedicated No. 8 — Bryant wore Nos. 8 and 24 during his 20 years with the Lakers — with a purple-and-gold tee sign. Woods made bird-



Tiger Woods reacts after missing a putt on the eighth hole during the first round of the Genesis Invitational golf tournament at Riviera Country Club, Thursday, Feb. 13, 2020, in the Pacific Palisades area of Los Angeles.

ie there, his last one of the round.

"Ironically having those two numbers," Woods said of the length of his eagle putt. "And then No. 8, happened to hit one in there close and had a nice little kick-in there for birdie."

Brooks Koepka had Nike design some purple-and-gold Mamba golf shoes last October because Bryant inspired him during his return from injury. Koepka called the shoe company after hearing of Bryant's death in a helicopter crash and suggested something be done, oblivious that he had requested the shoes months earlier. He opened with a 69.

Justin Thomas, who auctioned off Kobe-themed

sand wedges he used in the Phoenix Open, had FootJoys of purple-and-gold. They didn't help him much on this day.

He opened with a 74 and was in danger of missing the cut for the second time this year.

Woods seemed bent on having his say at Riviera with the eagle and two more birdies through eight holes, leaving him three off the lead and the back nine to play. But he couldn't keep his swing together, and it eventually caught up with him.

A drive to the right on No. 11 hit a eucalyptus tree and ricocheted to the left side of the fairway. He missed the green to the left on No. 12 for bogey. He hit a drive

into the left trees on No. 13 and got up-and-down from 165 yards for par. He dropped another shot on the 18th when after hitting so many drives to the left, he leaked one badly to the right and had to pitch out to the fairway, slamming his iron into the cart path in disgust as he walked through the crowd.

"Just didn't hit many good shots on the back nine," Woods said. "Made a couple loose swings and made a couple good saves on the back nine for par, but just wasn't able to get any birdies on the back nine."

He said his duties as tournament host kept him away from the practice range except for a short time before the pro-am Wednesday,

and he was trying to piece something together for the first round. It only lasted so long.

Kuchar made birdie on two of the par 5s, made two birdie putts of 30 feet or longer and rarely was in trouble.

"To shoot a number like this, you kind of do most things well," Kuchar said. "I didn't find myself in much trouble today. ... I felt like it was just steady golf, a lot of opportunities and I was able to convert on a good number of opportunities today"

K.H. Lee and Russell Henley also played bogey-free and were at 67, along with Wyndham Clark from the morning wave. Adam Schenk and Harold Varner III each had 67 in the afternoon under a little more breeze and greens that were bumpier from so much foot traffic during the day.

Rory McIlroy opened with a 68 in his return to No. 1 in the world, and it took him time to get going.

McIlroy's opening tee shot was pure enough, but it bounced over the 10th green and rolled up near the lip of a back bunker. He left his first shot in the sand and did well to escape with par, only to miss 3-foot putts on the next two holes — one for birdie, one for par. He had to scramble his way along the back until blasting a 3-wood to about 30 feet on the par-5 17th and making eagle, and then adding an eagle on par-5 opening hole.

The biggest challenge was the cold air in the morning. McIlroy ripped a drive — he did that a lot in the opening round — into the par-5 11th and then came up 30 yards short with a flush 3-wood. About two hours later, he had 289 yards for his second into the par-5 17th and hit 3-wood to pin-high.

"It just shows you what temperature does," McIlroy said.

Patrick Cantlay and Patrick Reed were among those at 68.

Even in mint conditions, only about one-third of the field broke par. □

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Pastrnak gets hat trick, Bruins beat Canadiens 4-1

By KYLE HIGHTOWER

AP Sports Writer

BOSTON (AP) — David Pastrnak has been one of the Bruins' most reliable scorers this season.

His latest big night came at the expense of one of Boston's longtime rivals.

Pastrnak had his fourth hat trick of the season and the Bruins rolled to their third straight win over the Montreal Canadiens, 4-1 on Wednesday night.

"Obviously playing Montreal, it's a big rival," Pastrnak said. "These games are always fun."

And even bigger for a Boston team that has won seven of its last eight and took three of four in the season series with its northern nemesis. The Bruins outscored the Canadiens 15-3 over the final three meetings. Montreal has lost two straight as it tries to stay in the hunt for the playoffs.

Patrice Bergeron added an empty-net goal and Tuukka Rask had 28 saves for the Bruins to improve to 13-0-6 at home this season.

Marco Scandella scored Montreal's lone goal. Canadiens goaltender Carey Price, who had allowed two or fewer goals in seven of his previous 11 starts, had 34 saves.

Pastrnak now has eight career regular-season hat tricks and nine overall, all but one coming in the last two seasons. He is the first Bruins player with four hat tricks in a season since Phil Esposito during the 1974-75 season. The only player in Bruins history with more hat tricks in a single season was Esposito, who had seven in



Boston Bruins right wing David Pastrnak (88) scores on Montreal Canadiens goaltender Carey Price during the first period of an NHL hockey game in Boston, Wednesday, Feb. 12, 2020. At left is Montreal Canadiens left wing Jonathan Drouin (92).

Associated Press

1970-71. Pastrnak becomes the second player in the NHL this season with four hat tricks, joining Washington's Alex Ovechkin.

With 41 goals on the season Pastrnak also takes over the NHL lead for goals scored. Ovechkin and Toronto's Auston Matthews both have 40. The Maple Leafs and Capitals were idle on Wednesday.

Pastrnak said he isn't taking reaching 40 goals for the first time in his career for granted.

"It's something I hadn't accomplished yet in my career, so obviously excited," he said. "But I couldn't have done it without my teammates. Big thanks come to them and just keep it rolling." Pastrnak's scoring barrage came on a night in which the intensity was at its usually high level between the longtime rivals. A total of 12 penalties were issued,

including six for roughing. The Bruins' 23-year-old forward needed just seven minutes of the first period to post the game's goal.

Brad Marchand intercepted a pass at the red line and skated into Canadiens' zone. From there he split defenders Jeff Petry and Brett Kulak, spun and passed to a cutting Pastrnak, who slipped a wrist shot past Price.

Marchand spent the final 1:12 of the first in the penalty box, along with Petry after getting into a brief wrestling match at center ice that was quickly broken up by officials. The exchange started when Petry checked Marchand into the boards. Marchand responded by poking his stick at Petry. He returned the favor, leading to both to drop their gloves.

The Bruins made it 2-0 early in the second period after

Sean Kuraly took the puck away from Petry to start a 2-on-1 break with Pastrnak, who completed it hard wrist shot past a diving Price. Montreal got a little luck to go their way just 36 seconds later, getting on the board when Scandella's long shot from just inside the blue line ricocheted off teammate Nick Suzuki and by Rask. But after Joel Armia was sent to the penalty box for roughing Torey Krug with 4:46 left in the period, Pastrnak got his final goal of the night on the power play 31 seconds later when he cut off Petry's clearance attempt of Marchand's shot in front of the crease and pushed it into the corner of the net.

Montreal has scored just three goals in its last two losses — something that winger Brendon Gallagher said much change sooner rather than later.

"We haven't really generated all that much for whatever reason," Gallagher said. "It's disappointing in a sense. But we're the desperate team. We need to find a way to collect points."

CANUCKS 3, BLACKHAWKS 0

VANCOUVER, British Columbia (AP) — Jacob Markstrom had a career-high 49 saves as Vancouver beat Chicago after retiring the numbers of retired stars Daniel and Henrik Sedin.

Brandon Sutter had a goal and two assists, and Bo Horvat and Adam Gaudette also scored to help the Canucks win their second straight after a four-game skid (0-3-1). Markstrom was marvelous in recording his second shutout of the season and fifth of his career. Corey Crawford finished with 17 saves as Chicago lost its season-high fifth straight (0-3-2). There was an electric atmosphere in the building for the retirement ceremony. The sold-out crowd was on its feet cheering as Henrik Sedin's No. 33 and Daniel Sedin's No. 22 were raised to the rafters at Rogers Arena.

KINGS 5, FLAMES 3

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Tyler Toffoli and Austin Wagner scored 39 seconds apart in the second period to give Los Angeles the lead, and the Kings went on to beat Calgary.

Kurtis MacDermid, Jeff Carter and Sean Walker also scored to help the Kings end a five-game losing streak. Calvin Petersen stopped 35 shots to get his first win of the season in his second start. □

Nets top Raptors, snap Toronto's franchise-record win streak

By The Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — The Toronto Raptors had their franchise-record winning streak stopped at 15 games with a 101-91 loss to the Brooklyn Nets on Wednesday night. The defending NBA champions were hoping to keep rolling right into the All-Star break but couldn't find the form that helped them average 121.2 points and shoot 50% over the previous 15 games.

This time, the Raptors hit only 37.8%, with Kyle Lowry's triple-double coming on a night the All-Star point guard was just 4 for 13. Caris LeVert scored 20 points for the Nets, who ended a six-game losing streak against the Raptors. That included a loss Saturday in Toronto, where LeVert scored a career-best 37 points.

Joe Harris added 19 points and Spencer Dinwiddie had 17 points and nine assists for the Nets, who head into the break 25-28 after having Kyrie Irving for just 20 games. He sat out again with a sprained right knee. Serge Ibaka had 28 points and nine rebounds for the Raptors after returning from a one-game absence with flu-like symptoms. Fred VanVleet scored 22 points and Lowry had 12 points, 12 assists and 11 rebounds.

LAKERS 120, NUGGETS 116, OT

DENVER (AP) — LeBron James posted a triple-double and Anthony Davis scored seven of his 33 points in overtime to push the Lakers past Denver. James had 32 points, 14 assists and 12 rebounds for his 12th triple-double of the season as the Lakers headed into the All-Star break with a four-game lead over second-place Denver in the Western Conference. The Lakers improved their NBA-best road record to 23-5.

Jamal Murray led the Nuggets with 33 points, but All-Star Nikola Jokic was in foul trouble and made some crucial blunders in the extra period, including a turnover on a bad pass with 19 seconds left after he passed up an open 3-pointer with



Brooklyn Nets guard Caris LeVert, far left, tries to pass to Brooklyn Nets center Jarrett Allen, second from right, around Toronto Raptors forward Chris Boucher (25) as Raptors forward Pascal Siakam (43) defends against the pass during the second quarter of an NBA basketball game, Wednesday, Feb. 12, 2020, in New York.

Denver down 119-116.

Jokic had 22 points and 11 rebounds for Denver, which saw its four-game winning streak snapped.

CAVALIERS 127, HAWKS 105
CLEVELAND (AP) — Tristan Thompson had 27 points and 11 rebounds, Larry Nance Jr. had a career-high 23 points, and Cleveland broke a 12-game home losing streak.

Cleveland, coming off the worst home loss in franchise history, went ahead midway through the first quarter and won at Rocket Mortgage FieldHouse for the first time since beating the Hawks on Dec. 23.

Cleveland was routed 133-92 by the Los Angeles Clippers on Sunday and had lost 13 of 14 overall.

Nance, starting in place of the injured Kevin Love, had 12 rebounds. Andre Drummond scored 14 points and had 15 rebounds. Drummond, acquired from Detroit at the trade deadline, has had a double-double in both games with Cleveland.

Collin Sexton, added to the Rising Stars roster this week, scored 23 points.

Trae Young scored 27 points and had 12 assists for the Hawks, who rallied after trailing 86-63 midway through the third quarter. Atlanta cut the lead to

nine in the fourth, but got no closer.

PACERS 118, BUCKS 111

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — T.J. Warren scored 35 points and Malcolm Brogdon added 17 points and tied a career high with 13 assists, helping Indiana hold on to beat Milwaukee.

The victory sent Indiana into the All-Star break with some momentum after beating the league's best team to end a season-worst seven-game losing streak. The Pacers also had lost five straight home games.

Donte DiVincenzo led the Bucks with 19 points and Khris Middleton added 17 as reigning MVP Giannis Antetokounmpo missed his second straight game following the birth of his first child.

Milwaukee's five-game winning streak also ended.

MAGIC 116, PISTONS 112, OT

ORLANDO, Fla. (AP) — Aaron Gordon scored 25 points and Markelle Fultz added 21 as Orlando rallied to beat Detroit.

Gordon, who also had nine rebounds and nine assists, hit consecutive 3-point shots late in the fourth quarter to help Orlando erase a seven-point deficit.

A 3-pointer by Nikola Vucevic gave Orlando a three-point lead with 5.5

seconds left before Detroit's Reggie Jackson hit a 3-pointer with 1.4 seconds left in regulation to send the game into overtime.

Christian Wood had 26 points and 12 rebounds for the Pistons, who rallied from a 22-point deficit but lost for the 11th time in 13 games.

WIZARDS 114, KNICKS 96

NEW YORK (AP) — Bradley Beal scored 30 points and Washington used a fourth-quarter surge to beat New York. Davis Bertans added 16 points, Isaac Bonga had 13 and Troy Brown Jr. scored 11 as Washington closed out the victory with a 34-19 run.

The Wizards have won five of their last seven games. Julius Randle led the Knicks with 21 points and 13 rebounds. Elfrid Payton scored 19, RJ Barrett added 16 and Mitchell Robinson had 11.

GRIZZLIES 111, TRAIL BLAZERS 104

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP) — Brandon Clarke matched his career high with 27 points, Ja Morant had 20 points and nine assists and Memphis beat Portland.

De'Anthony Melton and Jonas Valanciunas scored 12 points each, with Valanciunas also grabbing 18 rebounds. Clarke connected on 12 of 14 shots as Memphis won its second

straight and 15th in the last 19 games.

CJ McCollum led the Trail Blazers with 23 points, and Damian Lillard added 20 on a tough shooting night as he went 7 of 19 from the field before leaving with 3:22 left with what he said after the game was a groin injury. Lillard added he won't play in the All-Star Game because of the injury.

The Trail Blazers lost their second straight.

MAVERICKS 130, KINGS 111

DALLAS (AP) — Luka Dončić had 33 points and 12 rebounds in his return from a seven-game absence because of a sprained ankle, leading Dallas over Sacramento.

Dončić added eight assists in the NBA triple-double leader's final game before the break.

Kristaps Porzingis had 27 points and 13 rebounds with his fellow Euro star back after the 7-foot-3 Latvian recorded a career-best three consecutive games with at least 30 points and 10 rebounds while his Slovenian teammate was sidelined.

Buddy Hield scored 22 points and De'Aaron Fox added 16 for the Kings, who fell behind for good in the second quarter and were never closer than 11 points in the second half.

HORNETS 115, TIMBERWOLVES 108

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — Devonte' Graham scored 28 points and Malik Monk added 25 to lead Charlotte to a comeback win over Minnesota.

Bismack Biyombo had 14 points and 10 rebounds for the Hornets, who rallied from a double-figure deficit to spoil D'Angelo Russell's home debut with Minnesota. Miles Bridges added 20 points.

Russell had 26 points and 11 assists for the Timberwolves, who played without Karl-Anthony Towns but led for most of the first three quarters. Towns has a left wrist injury that will be further evaluated during the All-Star break.

Hornets guard Terry Rozier missed the game with left knee soreness. □

List of sports events affected by the coronavirus outbreak

By The Associated Press

ATHLETICS

World indoor championships in Nanjing from March 13-15 postponed to March 2021. Asian indoor championships in Hangzhou from Feb. 12-13 cancelled.

AUTO RACING

Formula One's Chinese Grand Prix in Shanghai on April 19 postponed. New date not set.

Formula E's Sanya E-Prix in Sanya on March 21 cancelled.

BADMINTON

China Masters in Hainan from Feb. 25-March 1 postponed. New dates not set. Asian team championships in Manila from Feb. 11-16: China and Hong Kong withdrew.

BASKETBALL

Women's Olympic qualifying tournament moved from Foshan to Belgrade, Serbia from Feb. 6-9.

Asian Cup qualifier between China and Malaysia on Feb. 24 postponed. Matches scheduled for Hong Kong moved to opponents' homes.

BIATHLON

Olympic test event in Zhangjiakou from Feb. 27-March 2 cancelled.

BOXING

Asia-Oceania Olympic qualifier moved from Wuhan to Amman, Jordan from March 3-11.

EQUESTRIAN

Hong Kong showjumping leg of Longines Masters Series from Feb. 14-16 cancelled.

FIELD HOCKEY

Hockey Pro League matches by China against Belgium and Australia in March postponed.

India women's tour of China from March 14-25 cancelled.

Ireland women's tour of Malaysia in March-April cancelled.

GOLF

US LPGA Tour Honda LPGA Thailand in Pattaya from Feb. 20-23 cancelled.

HSBC Women's World Championship in Singapore from Feb. 27-March 1 cancelled.

Blue Bay LPGA on Hainan Island from March 5-8 cancelled.

HANDBALL

Olympic women's qualifying tournament in Montenegro from March 20-22: China withdraw. Hong Kong declines invitation to attend.

ICE HOCKEY

Chinese clubs in Supreme Hockey League playing home games in Russia.

Women's Challenge Cup of Asia in Manila, Philippines, from Feb. 23-28 cancelled.

JUDO

Paris Grand Slam on Feb. 8-9: China team withdraw.

RUGBY

Hong Kong Sevens moved from April 3-5 to Oct. 16-18. Singapore Sevens moved from April 11-12 to Oct. 10-11.

SKIING

Alpine World Cup in Yanqing from Feb. 15-16 cancelled.

SOCCER

Asian Champions League: Matches involving Chinese clubs Beijing FC, Guangzhou Evergrande, Shanghai Shenhua, and Shanghai SIPG postponed to April-May.

Asian women's Olympic qualifying Group B tournament relocated from Wuhan to Sydney from Feb. 3-13. AFC Cup: All group stage and playoff matches in east zone delayed to April 7. Chinese Super League, due to start Feb. 22, delayed.

SWIMMING

Diving world series event in Beijing from March 7-9 cancelled.

TENNIS

Fed Cup Asia-Oceania Group I tournament moved from Dongguan to Dubai, United Arab Emirates, from March 3-7.

OTHERS

Chinese Anti-Doping Agency suspends testing from Feb. 3. Winter X Games events in Chongli from Feb. 21-23 postponed. World Chess Federation's presidential council meeting moved from China to United Arab Emirates on Feb. 28-29. Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Para Games in the Philippines from March 20-28 postponed. New dates not set. □

Judge orders open hearing on NFL team's emails with church

By KEVIN MCGILL

Associated Press

News outlets and the public will be able to attend a hearing next week in New Orleans on the confidentiality of emails between Roman Catholic officials and the city's NFL franchise concerning clergy sex-abuse scandals.

A state judge in New Orleans ruled Thursday that the Feb. 20 hearing will be open, although she cautioned attorneys that they must not disclose the contents of the emails at that hearing.

As The Associated Press reported last month, victims' lawyers allege that hundreds of Saints emails show team executives did behind-the-scenes public relations damage control amid the Archdiocese of New Orleans' clergy abuse crisis. The team has gone to court to keep the emails from being made public, saying court rules would ordinarily keep them under seal and that the plaintiffs' lawyers want them released "for publicity purposes."



In this Oct. 23, 2016, file photo, a New Orleans Saints helmet rests on the playing field before an NFL football game in Kansas City, Mo.

Associated Press

A court-appointed special master is to determine whether they may be released and will preside over next week's hearing. The AP has been allowed to intervene in the effort to get the emails released and lawyers for the news cooperative are being allowed to participate in arguments for release of the emails. Until the judge ruled Thursday, the Feb. 20 hearing before the special master was to be closed to the public.

The owners of The Times-

Picayune/The New Orleans Advocate, WVUE-TV, WWL-TV and WDSU-TV filed a motion for access to the hearing. A lawyer for the local news outlets said the AP should not be the only media outlet present at the hearing.

Judge Ellen Hazeur agreed. "All the public has a right to it," she said, ruling from the bench after a brief hearing. Lawyers for the Saints and the Archdiocese of New Orleans argued that special master hearings are routinely closed. □

Sablikova, Bloemen win world speedskating titles

By JOHN COON

Associated Press

KEARNS, Utah (AP) — Martina Sablikova of the Czech Republic and Ted-Jan Bloemen of Canada won individual gold medals Thursday on the first day of the ISU World Single Distances Speedskating Championships at the Utah Olympic Oval.

The Netherlands set a world record in women's team sprint, finishing in 1:24.02. The previous record was 1:24.84, set by Russia in 2017.

Bloemen claimed gold in the men's 5,000 meters with a time of 6:04.37. Sven Kramer of the Netherlands took silver with a time of 6:04.91. Graeme Fish of Canada earned bronze, finishing in 6:06.32.

It was the first world title for Bloemen, a rising star who



Carlijn Achtereekte, of the Netherlands, reacts after competing during the women's 3,000 meters at the world single distances speedskating championships Thursday, Feb. 13, 2020, in Kearns, Utah.

Associated Press

won gold in the 10,000 meters at the Pyeongchang Olympics in 2018 and took silver in the 5,000.

"Going into the season, I made this race really important for myself," Bloemen said. "Working toward

the Olympics in two years is so far away, so you've got to set goals along the way. This oval for me is really special. I skated two world records here and I thought that might be a possibility again today." □

Sticking to script: Bregman, Astros discuss sign stealing

Continued from Page 17

And thus the script was set. The most eyebrow-raising statement came soon thereafter, when Astros owner Jim Crane replied to a question from a reporter by saying: "Our opinion is that this didn't impact the game. We had a good team. We won the World Series. And we'll leave it at that." Moments later, Crane tried to backtrack, saying, "It's hard to determine how it impacted the game, if it impacted the game."

MLB Commissioner Rob Manfred disciplined the Astros after he found the team broke rules by using electronics to steal signs during 2017 and 2018. The investigation found the Astros used the video feed from a center field camera to view and decode opposing catchers' signs. Players banged on a trash can to signal to batters what was coming, believing it would improve chances of getting a hit.

Manager AJ Hinch and GM Jeff Luhnow were given one-year suspensions by Manfred; Crane then quickly fired both. MLB did not punish any players for the cheating and Crane said he stood by that.

"We're not going to do anything to the players," he

said. Crane and players denied that Astros hitters used buzzers to get information about pitches.

The owner repeatedly pointed to MLB's report instead of directly answering questions and vowed: "This will never happen again on my watch."

A day earlier, the Astros gathered at their facility, barring media from the grounds, and it was apparent that they mostly agreed on a unified message.

The talking points became clear Thursday before the first official workout of the spring as, one by one, the faces of the franchise spoke to the media in the clubhouse: Bregman, second baseman José Altuve, shortstop Carlos Correa, outfielder Josh Reddick, pitchers Justin Verlander and Lance McCullers.

The Astros share a Florida complex with the team they lost to in last year's World Series, the Washington Nationals, and this time, it was the runners-up that drew a lot more attention than the champs as both teams' camps opened.

"In the long run, some of their actions will speak louder than words and being sorry that you got caught and being sorry for what you did are two different things. It's not going to go away in



Houston Astros infielder Alex Bregman, left, and teammate Jose Altuve sit in chairs as they wait to deliver statements during a news conference before the start of the first official spring training baseball practice for the team Thursday, Feb. 13, 2020, in West Palm Beach, Fla.

Associated Press

one day. This is going to be an ongoing process, unfortunately," Nationals reliever Sean Doolittle said. "This is something that all of baseball has to reckon with, and we're all still trying to come to grips with it and process it. So it might take a bit."

Bregman's clubhouse session lasted 10 minutes and he stuck to his message. So, generally, did the others. Bregman, for example, used words like "apologizing" and "remorse," but made no mention of "signs" or "stealing" or "cheating." Some, such as Verlander, said they wished they had "said more" at the time to dissuade the use of the illegal system that helped

batters know what pitches were coming from opposing pitchers.

Like Crane, they refrained from offering any sort of apologies to teams or players they had beaten in 2017, specifically the New York Yankees in the AL championship series and the Los Angeles Dodgers in the World Series.

"I don't think we feel the need to reach out to those guys," Reddick said, "or anybody for that matter." When asked, inevitably, whether their 2017 title was tainted, they tended to use a variation of, "People have their own opinions," as Correa did.

Much like Crane and

Hinch's replacement as manager, Dusty Baker, insisted earlier Thursday, the players kept -- more hopefully, perhaps, than realistically -- insisting they were going to talk about this for one day and then focus on the new season to come. The most forthcoming and sincere-sounding statements came from Correa, who said the system was not as effective in the post-season because opposing catchers were using multiple signs to tell their pitchers what to throw.

"We feel bad and we don't want to be remembered as the team that cheated to get a championship," Correa said.

Unlike some of the rhetoric being offered all around him, Correa used the most basic language to deliver an apology that actually sounded very much like an apology and express remorse that actually sounded rather remorseful.

"What we did in '17 was wrong. ... It's not how we want to be remembered," Correa said. "I'm going to be honest with you: When we first started doing it, it almost felt like it was an advantage. ... But it was definitely wrong. It was definitely wrong and we should have stopped it at the time." □

NASCAR signs Verizon to upgrade wireless, wifi at 12 tracks

By JENNA FRYER
AP Auto Racing Writer
DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. (AP)

— NASCAR announced a deal with Verizon on Thursday intended to give fans at its 12 racetracks better access for their phones and solve a long-simmering headache over dead zones at the sprawling venues.

The deal will improve connectivity at the 12 tracks owned by NASCAR — a problem fans have complained about for years. Even when the top Cup Series was sponsored first by Nextel and then Sprint, cellular service was spotty and often only available to customers of those specific carriers.

Verizon will work with NASCAR to upgrade in-venue wireless communication service over the next three years. Verizon becomes the official wireless and 5G partner for the stock car racing series and the wi-fi partner at the 12 tracks, which host 19 of the 36 Cup Series races: Auto Club Speedway in Fontana (Calif.); Chicagoland in Joliet (Ill.); Darlington (S.C.); Daytona (Fla.); Homestead-Miami; Kansas (Kan.); Martinsville (Va.); Michigan (Brooklyn, Mich.); ISM Raceway near Phoenix; Richmond (Va.); Talladega (Ala.) and Watkins Glen (N.Y.).

Eleven tracks not owned by NASCAR also host Cup



Ryan Newman (6) and Brad Keselowski, front left, lead the field to start the NASCAR Busch Clash auto race at Daytona International Speedway, Sunday, Feb. 9, 2020, in Daytona Beach, Fla.

Associated Press

Series races. It will be up to their promoters to decide if a similar upgrade will be taken. Craig Neeb, executive vice president and chief innovation officer for NASCAR, would

not disclose the cost of the project. He said a renovation completed prior to last season at Phoenix Raceway included a "full investment not only from a cellular standpoint but the

wireless infrastructure" and the fan feedback proved it was a worthy investment. "All of us in a normal daily course of life use our phones all day and when you don't have the wireless access, the fan experience did suffer," Neeb said. "Unlike NBA or another sport, a NASCAR venue is a humongous infrastructure, it takes a lot to get it right," said Vickie Lonker, vice president of product management at Verizon Business. Neeb said NASCAR is the first track operator to take the step but hopes others will follow.

"We felt we could lead on this effort and if we can pave the way for others, even better," he said. □

Analysis: Commitment in football is simply self-preservation

By **RALPH D. RUSSO**

AP College Football Writer

College football needs to place a moratorium on the use of the words loyalty and commitment.

Everybody involved, coaches, administrators and, yes, even players have ceded the right to demand it from others.

"I think what we have created is a disloyal business model," said Gerry DiNardo, a former college football coach and current Big Ten network analyst. "I'm convinced this is no longer an educational endeavor. This is a completely business endeavor. Young coaches enter the profession now knowing they can be millionaires."

The latest coach to toss loyalty aside to scoop up a few more million is Mel Tucker, who was hired away from Colorado by Michigan State on Wednesday.

A little more than a year ago, Colorado made Tucker a very rich man with a \$14.8 million deal over five years in December 2018 to rebuild a football program that has had one winning season since joining the Pac-12 in 2011.

Tucker, 48, had been a longtime assistant in the NFL and at the highest levels of college football, working under Nick Saban at Alabama and Kirby Smart at Georgia, before becoming a head coach for the first time at Colorado.

Michigan State had Tucker on a short list of possible replacements for Mark Dantonio, who showed the extent of his loyalty to the school and players by announcing his retirement the day before a new crop of recruits signed with the Spartans — and a few weeks after receiving a \$4.3 million bonus.

Tucker, realizing he wasn't at the top of Michigan State's list, took the opportunity to proclaim his commitment to the Buffaloes on Twitter just three days ago. He probably wasn't going to get the job, but it benefited Tucker to let it be known he was in demand.



Mel Tucker, Michigan State's new football coach, speaks during a news conference Wednesday, Feb. 12, 2020, in East Lansing, Mich.

Associated Press

When Luke Fickell, choice No. 1 for Michigan State, decided he was better off staying put at Cincinnati, the Spartans circled back to Tucker. And now, a month before spring practice starts, Colorado is searching for a head coach again, trying to replace a guy who parlayed a single promising 5-7 season into six-year deal that pays \$5.5 million annually. A few months after Tucker was famously quoted saying, "There's no transfer portal in the real world," he went out and proved himself wrong.

"We have created this," DiNardo said. "And we won't let the kids transfer without penalty. The kids are watching this. What do you think they're thinking?"

If you think transfers are an epidemic in college, talk to high school coaches who are regularly losing top players to local powerhouse programs or IMG Academy down in Florida. That's business as usual these days as players and their families look out for their own best interests.

To be clear: Tucker is no villain. Fickell no hero. Each made a calculated deci-

sion about what was best for themselves and their families. As they should.

The shelf life on coaches has never been shorter. They can go from hot commodity to the hot seat faster with one poor season. Remember when Tom Herman looked like the second coming of Urban Meyer after two seasons at Houston? After three seasons at Texas, Herman is 25-15 and heads into Year 4 with little room for error, having just gutted most of his staff.

Willie Taggart was crushed by Oregon fans for making a move similar to Tucker's.

He left the Ducks after one season in 2017 to take over at Florida State, a dream job for the Sunshine State native.

Taggart got 21 games with the Seminoles before being fired. Don't feel too bad for him. His buyout was \$20 million.

Still, it might have cost more for FSU to keep Taggart.

Toddlers on Christmas morning have more patience than many college football fans and boosters, who are quick to cut off financial support if they don't think the coach can get it done. Athletic directors, with their own jobs on the line, often have little choice but respond to popular demand. "Loyalty, we shouldn't talk about it," said former coach Rick Neuheisel, who is now an analyst for CBS Sports. "It's doing what's best for you."

Taggart was one of three head coaches fired this cycle two years into their tenure. That used to be a rarity. Now second-tier Southeastern Conference programs Arkansas (with Chad Morris) and Mississippi State (with Joe Moorhead) are cutting loose coaches before Year 3.

It was not long ago Colorado did just that, hiring Jon Embree on the cheap in 2010 and then dumping him after he went 4-21 in two seasons. □

Petra Kvitova beats van Uytvanck in 3 sets in St. Petersburg

ST. PETERSBURG, Russia (AP)

— Petra Kvitova advanced to the quarterfinals at the St. Petersburg Ladies Trophy by beating Alison van Uytvanck 7-6 (1), 1-6, 6-2 on Thursday.

Kvitova saved a set point at 5-4 in the first set and then recovered after being broken in the first game of the decider. She then won six of the next seven games.

"It was pretty challenging today, for sure," said Kvitova, who was playing for the first time since losing to Ash Barty in the Australian Open quarterfinals last month.

Kvitova will next play Ekaterina Alexandrova, who



Petra Kvitova of Czech Republic returns the ball to Alison van Uytvanck of Belgium during the St. Petersburg Ladies Trophy-2020 tennis tournament match in St. Petersburg, Russia, Thursday, Feb. 13, 2020.

Associated Press

upset seventh-seeded Donna Vekic 6-1, 7-5.

Last year's St. Petersburg champion Kiki Bertens breezed past Veronika Kudermetova 6-1, 6-2 in a second-round match which lasted just 59 minutes.

Bertens hit six aces as she booked a quarterfinal against another Russian opponent, 18-year-old qualifier Anastasia Potapova. Bertens is seeded second in St. Petersburg as she tries to successfully defend a WTA title for the first time since she won the Nuremberg tournament in 2017.

Also, sixth-seeded Maria Sakkari beat Alize Cornet 6-2, 6-4 and will next face top-seeded Belinda Bencic in the quarterfinals. □

Samsung's new foldable phone: Cheaper, but still a novelty

By **RACHEL LERMAN** and **KELVIN CHAN**

**AP Technology Writers
SAN FRANCISCO (AP) —**

Samsung on Tuesday unveiled a new foldable phone, the Galaxy Z Flip, its second attempt to sell consumers on phones with bendable screens and clamshell designs.

The new phone can unfold from a small square upward into a traditional smartphone form, and will go on sale Feb. 14 starting



A Samsung worker gives a demonstration of the Galaxy Z Flip Phone at the Unpacked 2020 event in San Francisco, Tuesday, Feb. 11, 2020.

Associated Press

at \$1,380. The company announced the phone at a product event in San Francisco.

Samsung's first foldable phone, the Galaxy Fold, finally went on sale last September after delays and reports of screens break-

ing. The Fold, which carries a price tag of nearly \$2,000, folds at a vertical crease rather than horizontally as a flip-phone design would. Motorola has also taken the flip-phone approach with its new \$1,500 Razr phone.

The foldable phones represent manufacturers' attempt to energize a market where sales have slowed. Many consumers are holding onto old phones longer, in part because new phone features offer increasingly marginal benefits. But these foldable models come with higher price tags and are likely to appeal for now mostly to tech enthusiasts and others at the forefront of technology. "While there's a lot of excitement around this new category, it is still early days and they will evolve significantly," said Paolo Pescatore, an analyst at PP Foresight. "While these innovative new designs are nice to have, they're not must-have, sought-after features among users." The Z Flip can stay open at different angles for use watching videos or taking photos. When the phone is closed, it will take selfies and display notifications in a small window on the cover. Unfolded, its screen measures 6.7 inches di-

agonally. Samsung says it added fibers to the gap between the hinge and the phone to keep out dust and improve hinge function, likely to address shortcomings of the Galaxy Fold.

On the more traditional front, Samsung offers its S series. In a nod to the start of the 2020s, the South Korean company showed off the Galaxy S20, S20 Plus and S20 Ultra, skipping directly to the S20 from its previous S10 series.

The S20 phones are designed to take high-quality pictures in dark settings, Samsung product manager Mark Holloway said. The phones can take both video and photos at the same time, using artificial intelligence to zero in on the best moments to capture the still images.

Samsung's renewed focus on the camera follows other smartphone makers. Apple last fall announced the iPhone 11, which offers an additional lens for wider-angle shots and combined multiple shots with software to improve low-light images. Google's Pixel phones also offer a similar low-light feature.

Samsung's S phones already offer the wider angle and some features for low-lighting. But the company says the new phones will focus on high-resolution photos and the ability to zoom in 30 to 100 times, depending on the model. The camera on the S20 series is "a giant leap," said Patrick Moorhead of Moor Insights & Strategy, who argued that people might gravitate toward the more expensive models even as the sales of smartphones slow. □

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Newspaper chain McClatchy files for bankruptcy protection

By TALI ARBEL and
MICHELLE CHAPMAN
AP Business Writers

NEW YORK (AP) — McClatchy, the publisher of the Miami Herald, The Kansas City Star and dozens of other newspapers, has filed for bankruptcy protection as it struggles to pay off debt while revenue shrinks because more readers and advertisers are going online.

McClatchy said Thursday that its 30 newspapers will continue to operate normally as it reorganizes under Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection, helped by \$50 million in financing from Encina Business Credit.

The company hopes to emerge from bankruptcy protection in a few months as a private company, with majority ownership by a hedge fund that's currently McClatchy's largest shareholder and debtholder, Chatham Asset Management. That would end 163 years of family control.

It's also looking to unload its pension obligations to a federal corporation that guarantees pensions, so that employees would get the benefits they were entitled to.

McClatchy did not announce any layoffs and tried to reassure employees, saying that while "we are always looking at opportunities to improve operational efficiencies," the Chapter 11 process is "not geared around cost take-outs."

The newspaper industry has been deeply hurt by changing technology that has sent the vast majority of people online in search of news. Media companies have tried to shift online, with varying degrees of success, as their print ad revenue and circulation declined. Complicating matters, internet companies Facebook and Google receive most online ad dollars.

While some national newspapers, like The Wall Street Journal and The New York Times, are adding digital subscribers, helping them navigate advertising declines, many local outlets have had a difficult time. That has led to a string of consolidation, much of it involving investment firms, deepening concerns about declining quality as newsrooms shrink and papers close.

Gannett, the USA Today publisher, was bought last year by GateHouse, a chain managed by private equity firm Fortress, in a deal helped by a high-interest, \$1.8 billion loan from another financial firm, Apollo. It is the largest newspaper chain in the U.S. Another large chain, MediaNews, is owned by a hedge fund with a reputation for cutting costs and jobs, Alden Global.

Newspaper companies have been through a string of Chapter 11 reorganizations in recent years. The publisher of The Philadel-

phia Inquirer and Philadelphia Daily News emerged from bankruptcy protection in 2010, Chicago Tribune and The Baltimore Sun publisher Tribune Co. in 2012 and GateHouse in 2013.

McClatchy's bankruptcy filing "rings an alarm bell for local news," Poynter media business analyst Rick Edmonds said. "McClatchy's problems are very typical for those of local newspapers," he said, as the industry deals with an old business model that's deteriorating faster than digital and other new revenues are increasing.

McClatchy's 2006 purchase of the Knight-Ridder newspaper chain for \$4.5 billion added to McClatchy's debt and contributed to its financial woes as the industry's decline accelerated in subsequent years.

Though financial results aren't yet final, the company estimates that 2019 revenue fell 12.1% from the previous year, its sixth consecutive annual decline. McClatchy said its digital-only subscriptions have grown almost 50% to 200,000 over the past year. But that growth hasn't made up for the loss of advertising revenue that once flowed to its print newspapers.

In court documents, McClatchy said 40% of its revenue now comes from digital sources. It said it is trying to shift away from being so reliant on advertising. It

said half its revenue now comes from advertising, and half from circulation. The company said that for 2019, ad revenue fell 19%, while circulation revenue dropped 5%. McClatchy has struggled to pay money owed to its pension fund and has been in negotiations with the Pension Ben-

McClatchy said "substantially all" of the plan's participants and beneficiaries should get their entitled benefits.

McClatchy plans to pull its listing from the New York Stock Exchange as a publicly traded company. Chatham Asset will be the new majority owner. Chatham



This Oct. 14, 2009 file photo, shows copies of the McClatchy Co. owned Miami Herald newspaper in Miami. McClatchy Co., the publisher of the Miami Herald, The Kansas City Star and dozens of other newspapers across the country is filing for bankruptcy protection.

Associated Press

efit Guaranty Corporation, a federal guarantor of pensions, to assume control. In Thursday's filing with U.S. Bankruptcy Court in New York, it is seeking permission to appoint that corporation as the plan's trustee.

also is the majority shareholder of Canadian newspaper chain Postmedia and owns National Enquirer publisher American Media Inc. American Media is in the process of selling the Enquirer. □

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Flooding seems certain for some along the Missouri River

By JOSH FUNK

Associated Press

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — Several states along the Missouri River face an elevated flood risk this spring because the soil remains wet and a significant amount of snow is on the ground in the Dakotas, the National Weather Service said Thursday.

The forecast heightened concerns in areas of Nebraska, Iowa, Kansas and Missouri with levees that still have extensive damage from massive flooding last year and where residents and officials already anticipated some flooding.

"We are very concerned at this point," said Jud Kneuvean, who oversees emergency operations at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Kansas City office.

The weather service said Nebraska, Iowa, Kansas and Missouri and eastern North Dakota and South Dakota face an above-average flood risk this spring. The flood risk is close to normal in Montana and the western half of the Dakotas.

Even in places where the Corps has patched holes in levees that were damaged in last year's flooding, the level of protection may be lower than it was because initial repairs haven't all been done to the full regular height of the levees.

Officials say levee repairs will likely take two years to complete.

The status of levees varies greatly. In Iowa and Nebraska, many of the major levees have been patched, although some breaches remain open. In Kansas and Missouri, much of the repair work has yet to begin.

Part of the problem is that the water remained high



This March 18, 2019, file photo, taken by the South Dakota Civil Air Patrol and provided by the Iowa Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management shows flooding along the Missouri River in rural Iowa north of Omaha, Neb.

Associated Press

for so long in some areas that officials couldn't even assess some of the damage until recently.

In Missouri's hard-hit Holt County, where Tom Bullock serves as emergency management director, repairs have not yet started on the levees that broke and allowed roughly 95,000 acres (38,445.17 hectares) of mostly rural land to flood last spring.

"We're not looking very good for spring," Bullock said.

While most of the breaches around Hamburg, Iowa, have been patched, some repairs probably won't be done before spring, said Fremont County Emergency Manager Mike Crecelius.

"It's not a good outlook no matter how you look at it," Crecelius said.

The Missouri is the longest river in North America, running from western Montana through the Dakotas and touching Nebraska,

Iowa and Kansas before cutting across Missouri and entering the Mississippi River at St. Louis. The Corps of Engineers manages the river's flow using six dams and reservoirs in Montana and

the Dakotas.

Even if spring weather is mild, some places could still see flooding when the Corps increases releases from upstream dams on the river to prevent the res-

ervoirs from overflowing.

The Corps estimates 2020 runoff will reach 36.3 million acre-feet (44.8 cubic kilometers) — the ninth highest out of 122 years — so there will likely be significant water releases from the upriver dams.

The highest runoff year was 2011 with 61 million acre-feet (75.2 cubic kilometers), followed by 2019, with 60.9 million acre-feet (75.1 cubic kilometers).

Much of the land in low-lying areas nearest the river is cropland, so that often floods first, limiting damage to homes and businesses.

Farmer Gene Walter noted that the private levees that used to protect his cropland north of Council Bluffs, Iowa, remain wide open. Repairs won't be complete in time for typical spring flooding in March. So it could be a day-to-day decision for Walter on which acres to plant.

"You can't even plan or make plans," Walter said. "It's kind of upsetting." □

Record-setting astronaut feels good after near year in space



In this June 2019 photo made available by NASA, astronaut Christina Koch poses for a portrait inside of the vestibule between a SpaceX Dragon cargo craft and the Harmony module of the International Space Station.

Associated Press

By MARCIA DUNN

AP Aerospace Writer

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla.

(AP) — NASA's new record-setting astronaut said Wednesday that aside from sore muscles and trouble with balance, she's readjusting well to gravity after nearly 11 months in space.

Christina Koch met with reporters in Houston six days after returning to Earth from the International Space Station. Her 328-day mission — which ended last Thursday — was the longest ever by a woman.

Her neck hurt for about a day. "I felt like a 2-week-old who was actually working

hard to hold up my own head," she said.

She considers herself lucky she didn't have the sore feet and burning skin suffered four years ago by NASA's all-time endurance champ, Scott Kelly, whose mission lasted 340 days.

Koch returned home to Galveston, Texas, to find a kitchen full of chips and salsa, something she'd craved in orbit, along with the Gulf of Mexico. She hit the beach with her husband, Bob, and their dog, a rescue pup named LBD for Little Brown Dog, just three days after her landing in Kazakhstan.

LBD was excited to see her, and vice versa.

"I'm not sure who was more excited to see the other," Koch said.

Their reunion was recorded. "It's just a symbol of coming back to the people and places that you love, to see your favorite animal," she said. □

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24/7

Spoiler: George Washington lies, stands tall in docuseries

By LYNN ELBER
Associated Press
Television Writer

PASADENA, Calif. (AP) —

George Washington is the leading man in historian Doris Kearns Goodwin's first venture as a TV producer, a docudrama that follows his growth from ambitious young soldier to statesman. Spoiler alert for "Washington," airing 8 p.m. EST Sunday through Tuesday on the History channel: The future president does tell a lie, and it's a dismaying whopper. In the series that combines reenactments with expert commentary, myth gives way to checkered reality without diminishing his stature.

Nicholas Rowe ("The Crown," "Young Sherlock Holmes") plays Washington in re-creations of pivotal moments in his adult life, with historians including Jon Meacham and Annette Gordon-Reed and former Secretary of State Colin Powell among those providing context and insights. Although producing is new to Kearns Goodwin, her knack for narrative is on display in books including the Pulitzer Prize-winning Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt chronicle, "No Ordinary Time," and "Team of Rivals," about President Abraham Lincoln's wartime cabinet that included William Seward and Salmon Chase. It was adapted for Stephen Spielberg's Oscar-winning "Lincoln."

Goodwin spoke with The

Associated Press about the making of a leader and connecting the dots between history and current events. Excerpts from the interview have been edited for clarity and brevity.

AP: Why did you choose to profile George Washington, and why now?

Goodwin: In any kind of difficult time like now, being able to look back at leadership that was strong, that got us through troubled times, that you can learn from how that leader worked, is a good thing. We lived through a time when we might not have become the country we have. The revolution could have been lost. The presidency might have been really different. What ends the series is (Washington's) farewell address, and it is so timely a warning against party strife and what that can do for possible corruption or the influence of foreign nations, and the importance of retaining that sense of an American patriotism.

AP: You don't mention the current president, Donald Trump, or his administration in interviews. Are you leaving it to your readers and audience to contrast the past and present?

Goodwin: I like to use the echo of history. There's such similarities between the turn of the 19th century, the turn of the 20th century and now. There was a gap between the rich and the poor, immigrants coming in

from abroad. There's new inventions that are making people nervous. There's

Goodwin: I knew the facts about George Washington, but I never conjured

lose. They were going to be cocky or they'd made misjudgments. And that's what



In this Oct. 7, 2013, file photo, author Doris Kearns Goodwin poses for a portrait at her home in Concord, Mass.

Associated Press

people in the country feeling cut off from people in the city. There's a nostalgia for an earlier way of life, producing populism and anti-Wall Street, anti-immigrant (fervor). What eventually gets us out of that is that Teddy Roosevelt comes along for a square deal for the capitalist and the wage worker, rather than William Jennings Bryan or some of the real conservatives on the other side. AP: In researching the Washington series, what surprised you about him?

him alive in my mind. I think in part it has to do with the pictures we see. He's old, he's stiff. I now can picture Washington as a young man. He's young, and he's making mistakes and he's covering them. There was a student at a college, after I'd given a lecture on (former presidents), who asked, 'How can I ever become one of them? They're on Mount Rushmore. They're too distant.' But when they'd go through a run for office for the first time, they were going to

one of the experts says in the series: This is Washington, warts and all. He wasn't born great. He took a journey to greatness.

AP: You spend years researching your books, essentially living with the people you write about. Do you ever get bored with them? Goodwin: You have to choose your subjects. I happened to be up in Seward's house in upstate New York and I knew he had a thousand letters to his wife, and I got interested in him. And I got interested in Chase. □

Loughlin, Giannulli: No college bribery trial until 2021

By ALANNA DURKIN RICHER
Associated Press

BOSTON (AP) — Lawyers for "Full House" actress Lori Loughlin, her fashion designer husband Mossimo Giannulli and other prominent parents charged in the sweeping college admissions bribery case say they won't be ready to go to trial until next year.

Federal prosecutors in Boston have said the first trial for the wealthy parents still fighting the charges should begin in October and that Loughlin and Giannulli should be tried in the first group.

But the substantial amount of evidence, outstanding pretrial motions and "general complexity" of

the case make a trial this fall impossible, attorney Sean Berkowitz, who's representing Loughlin and Giannulli, said in a response filed Wednesday. The first trial should begin no sooner than next February, Berkowitz said.

The judge will ultimately decide when the trials will begin.

Prosecutors have provided the defense with more than 1.9 million documents, consisting of more than 3.2 million pages, and more than 300 hours of audio and video, said Robert Popeo, an attorney for another parent charged in the case, media executive Elizabeth Kimmel.

Loughlin and Giannulli are ac-

cused of paying \$500,000 to get their daughters into the University of Southern California as crew recruits even though neither was a rower. Authorities say the money was funneled through a sham charity operated by college admissions consultant Rick Singer, who has pleaded guilty to orchestrating the scheme.

Loughlin's lawyers have indicated they will argue that the couple believed their payments were legitimate donations and have accused prosecutors of hiding evidence that would support their claims of innocence while trying to bully them into pleading guilty. Other parents are accused of pay-

ing to have someone cheat on their children's entrance exams or similarly paying bribes to get them admitted to schools as fake recruited athletes.

Lawyers for Loughlin, Giannulli and other parents are also challenging prosecutors' proposed groupings of the parents for the trials, saying "it lacks an organizing principle and makes no effort to treat like defendants alike."

Berkowitz also indicated that some parents will argue they should have their own separate trials because "a joint trial will result in substantial prejudice."

A status hearing in the case is scheduled for Feb. 27. □



This image released by Universal Pictures shows Y'lan Noel, left, and Chanté Adams in "The Photograph."
(Sabrina Lantos/Universal Pictures via AP)

Review: 'The Photograph' develops nicely into a fine film

By **MARK KENNEDY**
Associated Press
Entertainment Writer

This Valentine's Day, there's certain to be the usual flood of candy and flowers. But at your local movie theater, there's something increasingly rare: A soulful and adult romantic drama in "The Photograph."

Issa Rae and Lakeith Stanfield star as tentative, would-be lovers in modern-day New York. He's a magazine writer on an assignment and she's a museum curator. They first connect over a photograph of her mother that unlocks mom's backstory, set in 1980s Louisiana. That's another plus for the film: Value — not one but two love stories.

Written and directed by Stella Meghie, the film is a gentle and attentive inter-generational tale with a first-rate cast. To the always-charged romantic question "Do I love this stranger?" it adds another equally fraught query: "Am I becoming my mom?" Lakeith (FX's "Atlanta") plays Michael as a coiled, watchful and smoldering hunk who seems to be acting from deep within his guts. He's just as likely to flee as he is of cuddling. Rae's Mae is luminous and charismatic, with wide eyes that convey so many emotions. When Rae (HBO's "Insecure") bursts into a laugh,

she seems to tap into that joyful, infectious place that Julia Roberts does.

Their initial mating dance is as cute as any rom-com — who's making the first move? — before they finally get together and have a meal. And how refreshing it is to hear a debate over who's the better rapper — Drake or Kendrick Lamar — as the first date conversation?

But Meghie ("The Weekend") is not interested in a mere rom-com and "The Photograph" has miles more heft and depth. She's interested in exploring how behavior can be inherited, how ambition can topple personal lives, how we establish patterns in our love life and how bravery in romance can be just about saying what your heart feels.

It turns out that Mae's estranged mother — a wonderful, haunted Chanté Adams — was a driven photographer who wasn't always able to convey her feelings. "I wish I was as good at love as I am at working," she observes. In death, she leaves behind letters explaining her life, which lead her daughter and her new beau to investigate.

The film takes turns switching eras to tell each woman's story — from New York's trendy whiskey bars and

the sleek leather couches of upscale apartments to the faded grandeur of New Orleans in the 1980s. The filmmakers change film techniques and styles for each venue, deepening an experience that's also reflected in changing music, time-traveling from Anderson .Paak to Chaka Khan.

As Mae keeps digging, she unpacks more than just her mom's secrets. "What if I'm just like her?" she asks at one point. Her dad, played by Courtney B. Vance, tries to help: "She wasn't just your mother," he tells her. "She was just a woman with flaws."

Smaller parts in the film are filled with real skill, especially by Lil Rel Howery, who plays Michael's brother with what seems a comedian's effortless lightness, and Y'lan Noel and Rob Morgan, who each play the former lover of Mae's mother in the different eras.

Meghie's script is very human, respectful of hesitancy and thoughtful without being flashy. "Good things take time to develop," Michael says at one point, which has a double meaning when it comes to photographs. The camera lovingly comes very close to the faces of our main lovers, allowing two people to quietly show their torn emotions. □

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PH	MON-THU 6:00 8:20
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SUN	3:40 6:00 8:20

CXC

MON-THU	5:30 7:50
FRI	5:30 7:50 10:10
SAT	3:10 5:30 7:50 10:10
SUN	3:10 5:30 7:50

PBP

MON-THU	4:20 6:35 8:50
FRI	4:20 6:35 8:50 11:05
SAT	2:05 4:20 6:35 8:50 11:05
SUN	2:05 4:20 6:35 8:50

SPANISH

PBP

MON-FRI	5:00 7:20
SAT-SUN	2:40 5:00 7:20

FANTASY ISLAND LUCY HALE | MAGGIE Q

PH	MON-THU 6:00 8:30
FRI	6:00 8:30 11:00
SAT	3:00 6:00 8:30 11:00
SUN	3:00 6:00 8:30

PBP

MON-FRI	4:30 7:00 9:30
SAT-SUN	2:00 4:30 7:00 9:30

THE PHOTOGRAPH LAKEITH STANFIELD | ISSA RAE

PH	MON-THU 5:50 8:15
FRI	5:50 8:15 10:40
SAT	3:25 5:50 8:15 10:40
SUN	3:25 5:50 8:15

PBP

MON-THU	4:20 6:45 9:10
FRI	4:20 6:45 9:10 11:35
SAT	1:55 4:20 6:45 9:10 11:35
SUN	1:55 4:20 6:45 9:10

LOVE AAJ KAL 2 KARTIK AARYAN | SARA ALI KHAN

PBP	MON-FRI 6:00
SAT-SUN	3:00 6:00

BAD BOYS FOR LIFE WILL SMITH | MARTIN LAWRENCE

PH	MON-FRI 5:50 8:35
SAT-SUN	3:05 5:50 8:35

PBP

MON-FRI	4:00 6:40 9:20
SAT-SUN	1:20 4:00 6:40 9:20

BIRDS OF PREY MARGOT ROBBIE | MARY ELIZABETH WINSTED

PH	MON-THU 6:10 8:40
FRI	6:10 8:40 11:10
SAT	3:40 6:10 8:40 11:10
SUN	3:40 6:10 8:40

PBP

MON-THU	4:35 7:00 9:25
FRI	4:35 7:00 9:25 10:00
SAT	2:10 4:35 7:00 9:25 10:00
SUN	2:10 4:35 7:00 9:25

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Darius Rucker's "Wagon Wheel" keeps rolling

By **Kristin M. Hall**
Associated Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — Country singer Darius Rucker couldn't quite believe it when he was surprised this week with the news that his song "Wagon Wheel" was certified eight times platinum, making it one of the top five most popular country singles ever.

On Wednesday, Rucker stopped by the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum to see his items in an exhibit, but his label, Universal Music Group Nashville, surprised him with a plaque featuring eight platinum-colored records. After re-

peating the word "Wow!" over and over, Rucker muttered to himself, "That can't be true," as he inspected the plaque in his hands. According to the Recording Industry Association of America, "Wagon Wheel" now joins other multiplatinum hits among country music's biggest songs in RIAA's 60-year history, including Taylor Swift's "Love Story," Lady Antebellum's "Need You Now," Florida Georgia Line's "Cruise," and Lil Nas X's "Old Town Road." "It's amazing to me because I came here to make country music, and I didn't expect success and I



In this May 25, 2018 file photo, Darius Rucker performs on NBC's Today show at Rockefeller Plaza in New York.
Associated Press

didn't expect to be on the radio," said Rucker, who had already had a highly successful rock career as lead singer of Hootie and the Blowfish. □

Michael Kors reminds that staying in can be chic, glamorous

By KELLI KENNEDY

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Michael Kors is so over leggings and sports bras. He used Wednesday's fall collection as a reminder that staying in and cozying up by the fire can still be chic and glamorous.

Blake Lively, Julia Louis-Dreyfus, Issa Rae and Anna Wintour sat in the front row at the star-studded event held on the final day of New York Fashion Week.

The collection was all about dressing for a country getaway and unplugging from busy life with a strong equestrian feel, heavy on camels, grays and blacks with sparse hits of red and orange. Everything was draped with a cape, hood or cozy cowl neck — even a chunky tan sweater was complemented with a matching sweater tied around the neck for extra snuggles.

The ubiquitous and often naked athleisure wear is "not sexy, it's not alluring," Kors said during a backstage interview with The Associated Press.



The Michael Kors collection is modeled during Fashion Week in New York, Wednesday, Feb. 12, 2020.

"I like casual clothes. We're American. We invented it, but now we've got to reel it back."

Lively, who came dressed in a menswear inspired look in a plaid vest, wide-leg trousers and white button down, said Kors brought her to her very first fashion show nearly a decade ago

when she was the new girl in town. "I didn't have any friends and then I get a call from Michael Kors saying, 'do you want to be my date to some fancy fashion show,'" said Lively, who gushed about the designer's kindness. "Sometimes we think of fashion as very standoffish, but my experi-

ence is that it's been very warm and welcoming."

Several young stars also attended the show, including actresses Dove Cameron and Olivia Holt and singer Kelsea Ballerini.

"I love the menswear vibes. I'm very into suits at the moment," said Cameron, who wore an oversized black

striped suit jacket. "It's so sexy. Everything he does is so tailored."

Holt said it was her first time attending Kors' show.

"I don't spend a lot of time in the fashion world so to be able to be here and take it all in and embrace it and soak it all up is a really special experience," she told the AP. The fall collection showed very little skin except for a handful of evening looks, which still kept with the relaxed chic vibe paired with sweaters, turtlenecks and capes. A long, gold pleated skirt was paired with a military jacket. A thick, alpaca fringed scarf was paired with a gunmetal sequined pleated dress. Sharp tailoring gave slouchy trousers and riding pants an urban sense. Suede, leather and shearling outerwear was paired with fluid, pleated skirts and dresses.

Festive plaids, houndstooth and warm paisley prints studded the show. Everything was paired with boots — riding, over-the-knee wellies or stacked-heel city boots. □

German filmmaker Vilsmaier, known for 'Stalingrad,' dies

BERLIN (AP) — Joseph Vilsmaier, a German filmmaker whose striking portrayal of the Battle of Stalingrad brought home the horrors of war to a new generation, has died.

He was 81.

His agent confirmed Wednesday that Vilsmaier "died peacefully at his home" in Bavaria on Tuesday.

Vilsmaier's 1993 film "Stalingrad" painted a grim picture of the fate of a group of Wehrmacht soldiers sent to the eastern front in 1942 to fight what would become a losing battle against the Soviet Army. The months-long siege of the city, now known as Volgograd, cost the lives of millions of soldiers and civilians and marked a turning point for Nazi Germany in World War II.

Born in Munich in 1939, Vilsmaier studied music and worked as a technician be-

fore gaining a foothold in the film business in the early 1960s as a runner and later making a name for himself as a cameraman for German television.

Vilsmaier made his debut as a film director in 1988 with "Herbstmilch," or "Autumn Milk," the story of a Bavarian peasant woman that became a box office hit in Germany.

Many of his films focused on tumultuous periods in German history, often from the perspective of ordinary people.

A notable exception was "Marlene," Vilsmaier's 2000 film about the life of actress and singer Marlene Dietrich.

Germany's minister for culture, Monika Grütters, praised Vilsmaier as a "passionate artist" who managed to convey "complex, historical topics" to audiences of millions.

Vilsmaier is survived by



In this Friday, Jan. 19, 2007 file photo German movie producer Joseph Vilsmaier attends the awarding ceremony of the Bavarian Movie Award at the Prinzregententheater in Munich, Germany. Associated Press

three daughters, Janina, Theresa and Josephina. His second wife, Czech actress and director Dana Váv-

rová, died in 2009. □

Snapping into place: Jigsaw puzzles have ardent following

By **TRACEE M. HERBAUGH**
Associated Press

There are jigsaw puzzle nights at coffee shops and libraries. Puzzle groups and puzzle games online. Hand-cut wooden puzzles that cost thousands of dollars. And puzzle designs that range from edgy, original artwork to your own, custom-ordered family photos. Jigsaw puzzles for grown-ups are in vogue.

"I was not as passionate about jigsaw puzzles at first, but once I started doing them, I saw the loveliness of these puzzles," said A.J. Jacobs, a writer working on a book about puzzles, including jigsaws and crosswords. "Puzzles are a very soothing and joyous way to spend a couple of hours.

They're physical, tactile pieces and you get an endorphin rush when pieces snap into place."

Fans say jigsaws provided respite from daily stress, a chance to step away from the screens and be in the moment.

Abby Matson, 37, found them therapeutic after the unexpected death of her dog three years ago.

"The puzzle was the only thing I could do to keep from crying," she said.

Matson's friend, Abby McDaniel, 38, joined her. "We stayed up so late drinking wine and doing this puzzle," Matson said.

They started a puzzle group that now has six members. It's informal. Members send photos of a completed puzzle before mailing it to the next person.

"It brings out an inner competition," McDaniel said.

Jacobs, author of books including "The Know It-All" and "The Year of Living Biblically," enjoys immersing himself in an activity and then writing about it. Part of his research into puzzles took him to the World Jigsaw Puzzle Championship in Spain, a timed competition with teams representing 40 countries.

He, his wife and two children finished second to last.

A team of four Siberian women won first place when they managed to



This undated photo provided by Stave Puzzles shows one of the company's traditional jigsaw puzzles titled "Ocean Sunset." Jigsaw puzzles are in vogue.

Associated Press



This photo taken on Sept. 28, 2019 and provided by A.J. Jacobs shows Jacobs, left, his sons Jasper, 15, Zane, 13, and his wife Julie Jacobs at the 2019 World Jigsaw Puzzle Championship in Spain

Associated Press



In this undated photo, provided by Shelby Comstock Britten, a group of people work on a "Jiggy" jigsaw puzzle at the trendy SoHo House hotel in New York.

Associated Press

finish all four puzzles in less than four hours.

"Russia is a force to be reckoned with," Jacobs said with a laugh.

While many puzzlers are happy with cardboard puzzles, there's also a market for wooden and artisanal ones.

Inspired artwork has replaced campy photos. Some enthusiasts buy special frames, glue and other tools for preserving finished jigsaw puzzles.

Vermont-based Stave Puzzles makes a wide range of wooden puzzles, from "Tidbits" to "Tormentors"; they sell for hundreds, even thousands of dollars.

"Our sales are up 25 percent in the last decade," said company founder



This undated photo provided by Stave Puzzles shows one of their jigsaw puzzles titled "The Mane Event," which sells for \$1,695.

Associated Press

Steve Richardson.

"We are now seeing orders from the children and grandchildren of some of our original customers, so it is definitely a generational activity."

In addition to getting nicer, jigsaw puzzles have become specialized too. There are 3-D and two-sided puzzles. Stave's "trick puzzle" can be solved in multiple ways, rated on a scale of 1 (easy) to 5 (difficult).

Customers cannot buy a 5-trick puzzle without successfully completing a level 4 first.

Other people prefer a simple jigsaw that reminds them of childhood — but one that's worthy of social media, of course.

Walking home after work one day, Kaylin Marcotte, 29, stopped at a toy store in New York City to buy a puzzle for the evening. "I ended up purchasing one of puppies jumping out of a basket," she said. Seeing a gap in the market for sophisticated puzzles, she founded Jiggy Puzzles in 2018.

Jiggy's puzzles are packaged in an elegant glass container and feature original drawings by female artists.

They come in two sizes, 450 and 800 pieces, and many sell for about \$40. The art ranges from New York City scenes to whimsical, feel-good drawings. One puzzle shows women's breasts in varying shapes, including some with mastectomy scars.

To launch Jiggy, Marcotte hosted a puzzle night at the Soho House in New York City.

About 50 young professionals arrived dressed for an evening of drinks and jigsaws.

Shelby Comstock Britten, 29, attended the launch. A grown-up puzzle night with drinks sounded perfect, she said.

"I've always loved puzzles and will occasionally get a CVS puzzle, but it's kind of a bummer because it's made for an 8-year-old," she said. "I can't Instagram that." □